



مكة من أجل

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية سياسية مستقلة عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية والرأي

Khamenei pays homage to Khomeini

TEHRAN (AP) — Iranian spiritual leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei attended a ceremony at the grave of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini Monday to mark the anniversary of his 1979 return from exile. The event was part of a 10-day observance marking the 14th anniversary of the Islamic revolution. Ayatollah Khomeini returned from exile in Iraq and France on Feb. 1, 1979, to a tumultuous public welcome. Fifteen days earlier, the Iranian ruler, Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi, had left his country, never to return. Ayatollah Khomeini died on June 3, 1989. President Hashemi Rafsanjani broadcast an anniversary message on Tehran Radio, saying Ayatollah Khomeini's return had changed "everything from negative to positive and from misery to prosperity." He said that the Islamic revolution had given power to the people "to decide their own fate," according to the official Islamic Republic News Agency. Mr. Rafsanjani said it was also important for stopping the creep of Western culture, which threatened to corrupt Iranian youth. On Sunday, Mr. Rafsanjani urged the West to make goodwill gestures towards Iran if it wants to improve relations.

Kuwait bans reports on financial scandals

KUWAIT (AP) — Kuwait's chief prosecutor banned the local press Monday from reporting on financial scandals under investigation without his permission, stirring fears that the emirate's newly gained press freedom might be threatened. Prosecutor General Mohammad Al Bana said such reports have hampered investigations into the fall of a multi-billion-dollar investment empire in Spain and a potential \$100 million embezzlement in the state-run oil tanker company that could reach into the royal family. "They help the perpetrator cover the truth, make up a defence or transfer his money out of the country," said a statement issued by the prosecutor's office. Adnan Abdul Samad, a parliament opposition deputy, told the Association Press the statement was "totally refused" by the legislature. "He is asking everybody to refrain from giving information to the press and that means deputies are included. This is an infringement on legislative authority," Mr. Abdul Samad said after meeting with a number of deputies to discuss the matter.

Volume 17 Number 5223

AMMAN TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 1993, SHA'BAN 10, 1413

Price: Jordan 100 fils; Saudi Arabia 1.50 riyals; UAE 1.50 dirhams

German spied for Iraq — Iran

TEHRAN (R) — A Tehran newspaper said Monday a German engineer sentenced to death by an Iranian court had spied for Iraq with the knowledge and approval of German diplomats. Salam newspaper said Helmut Szimkus was recruited by an Iraqi intelligence officer in 1985-86 and the information he sent to Iraq in return for sums of money helped the Iraqi army in its air and missile attacks during the 1980-88 Iran-Iraq war. The report also alleged that Mr. Szimkus met a Saudi diplomat and a United Arab Emirates (UAE) diplomat in Tehran before leaving Iran at the end of the first of two "spying" stints. German, Saudi and UAE diplomats were not immediately available to comment on the report, which Salam said was researched by its reporters.

Leftist Israeli magazine is folding

TEL AVIV (AP) — New Outlook, the leftist-Zionist magazine that philosopher Martin Buber helped found to promote peace between Jews and Arabs, is shutting down after 35 years. "We simply ran out of money," editor Chaim Shur told the Associated Press Monday. "The economic situation reduced our funds." New Outlook relied almost entirely on funds raised among sympathetic readers overseas and maintained advisory boards in the United States and Britain. The English-language bimonthly, whose circulation never reached more than 5,000, had an impact beyond its size. Opinion makers used the magazine as a forum for their views on the peace process.

OIC consulting over summit on Bosnia

JEDDAH (AP) — A pan-Islamic summit over the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina is under consideration after the failure of the Geneva peace talks among the combatants, officials of the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) said Monday. They said Hajim Al Ghabid, secretary-general of the 51-member organisation, and the OIC's current chairman, President Abdou Diouf of Senegal, were discussing whether to convene an extraordinary summit session. The OIC held two emergency meetings of Islamic foreign ministers last June in Turkey and two months ago in Saudi Arabia. In January, there was an Islamic mini-summit in Dakar, Senegal, which was attended by Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic.

Syria pledges military support for Lebanon

DAMASCUS (AP) — President Hafez Al Assad Monday pledged military support to the Lebanese army to bolster security and sectarian reconciliation, sources close to Lebanese army commander General Emile Lahoud said. There was no word whether Gen. Lahoud, who arrived in Damascus Sunday for two days of talks with Syrian leaders, discussed the heavy question of the withdrawal of Syrian forces from Beirut and other Lebanese cities to the eastern Bekaa Valley. But Gen. Lahoud's visit came amid preparations for the first meeting of the 40 countries' Supreme Council, aimed under a May 22, 1991, treaty of brotherhood and cooperation. No date has yet been set for the council meeting, which will be chaired by Mr. Assad and Lebanese President Elias Hrawi. Syrian Prime Minister Mahmoud Jomh will visit Beirut soon for consultations on the meeting, Syrian sources reported.

Arafat heads for Iraq after talks with King PLO leader said carrying 'Arab message' for Saddam Hussein

By Mariam M. Shabih
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat headed for Baghdad Monday for talks with Iraqi President Saddam Hussein after briefly meeting and consulting with His Majesty King Hussein at the residence of the Palestinian ambassador to Jordan.

After the informal 90-minute meeting with Mr. Arafat, King Hussein paid tribute to the close ties which he and the Palestinian leader enjoy. "This is another opportunity to meet and discuss current issues and problems. It has been a good chance to catch up on what we have missed since we last met," King Hussein told reporters after the meeting. Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker and Royal Court Chief Khaled Al Karaki as well as head of PLO Political Department head Farouk Khadumi, PLO Executive Committee members Abdullah Hourani and Yasser Amer and Palestinian Ambassador Tayeb Abdul Rahim attended the meeting. Mr. Arafat told the press that King Hussein was the man to

bring about Arab reconciliation. He said Monday's talks here centred on the fate of Palestinian expellees stranded in South Lebanon, international legitimacy, possible U.N. sanctions on Israel and the continuation of the Arab-Israeli peace process.

Mr. Arafat said nothing about the purpose of his 48-hour visit to Baghdad. But senior Palestinian officials confirmed that Mr. Arafat was expected to hold talks with the Iraqi leadership on issues concerning regional stability, including Iraq's relations with the West and the future of the Arab-Israeli peace talks.

Mr. Arafat was the first Arab leader to meet with the Iraqi president since a U.S.-led coalition launched a month-long war against Iraq in January 1991 to end Iraq's occupation of Kuwait. Mr. Arafat is said to be carrying a message to President Saddam from "concerned Arab parties," according to a high-ranking Palestinian official who asked not to be named.

"Abu Ammar is carrying some suggestions — some advice — to the Iraqi leadership on how to

proceed with the new U.S. administration and the U.N.," said the official.

Mr. Arafat's visit to Baghdad precedes a visit to the region by the newly-appointed U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher. According to sources close to the U.S. government, it is unlikely that Mr. Christopher will visit the region before the crisis sparked by Israel's Dec. 17 expulsion of over 400 Palestinians is settled. "It is unlikely that there will be a Christopher visit before the crisis has been settled," said a spokesman at the U.S. embassy in the Jordan Times Monday.

The Clinton administration has given mixed signals about its position vis-a-vis Iraq, but the Iraqi leadership as well as that of several other Arab states believe that Mr. Clinton will approach Iraq on the basis of "U.S. strategic interests."

Statements made to the U.S. press by Mr. Clinton indicate that this is likely to be the case. Mr. Clinton was quoted by the New York Times as saying that he was not "obsessed with the man (Saddam Hussein)" and that "if he wants a different relationship

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Christopher optimistic on crisis

UNITED NATIONS (Agencies) — U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher said Monday he was optimistic that the standoff between Israel and some 400 Palestinian evictees would soon be resolved.

Speaking to reporters shortly before he was to have a lunch meeting with U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali, Mr. Christopher said that over the last several days the United States and Israel "have been engaged in extensive conversations on the deportation issue."

"Both President (Bill) Clinton and I feel that these discussions have been positive and productive," he said. "We're quite optimistic that they will open the way to a resolution of this issue and enable us to put this issue behind us," he added.

Mr. Christopher was to discuss the expulsion controversy as well as the civil war in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the international

relief effort in Somalia in his first meeting with Dr. Ghali since he became secretary of state. Israel expelled the Palestinians on Dec. 17 to southern Lebanon, accusing them of links with Islamic extremist organisations responsible for the deaths of several Israeli servicemen.

It has so far refused to implement a Dec. 18 Security Council resolution calling for their immediate return, prompting Arab countries to call for the imposition of sanctions against Israel. The Israeli cabinet convened a special meeting Monday amid increasing international pressure over the expulsions.

The radio said Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin called the meeting to update ministers on the crisis. Israel Radio said the cabinet was discussing a compromise with the United States to end the impasse. Some evictees would return now, others would go to a third country.

Reporters at the parliament said Mr. Rabin and his ministers left in the middle of a session and entered Mr. Rabin's Knesset office. Also at the meeting were Chief of Staff Ehud Barak, the head of the Shin Bet secret police and the government legal adviser, the radio said.

In Brussels, Israel called for closer cooperation with the European Community (EC) Monday, but was likely to see its request hurt by the expulsions.

"I can well imagine that (the EC nations) expect the problem to be resolved rapidly, so that it does not overshadow our relations," Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres said.

Mr. Peres was seeking to improve economic relations and open the way for the eventual membership of Israel in the European Economic Area, the plan to set up a single market between

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His Majesty King Hussein and Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat greet each other Monday at the residence of the Palestinian ambassador in Jordan (AFP photo)

U.S. to list Hamas in 'terrorism' report

WASHINGTON (R) — The U.S. State Department will this year for the first time officially label the Islamic fundamentalist Hamas organisation as a "terrorist" group in its annual terrorism report.

"Hamas does commit terrorism and we'll be talking about that in our next report that comes out in April," said a State department official, who asked not to be identified.

The group, which operates in the Israel-occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, is at the centre of a diplomatic row that threatens the Middle East peace process following Israel's expulsion last month of 415 suspected members of Hamas and Islamic Jihad, another hardline group.

This weekend, Israel said it arrested three U.S. citizens of Palestinian extraction, saying they had been discovered with large sums of money and were trying to rebuild Hamas after the expulsions and 1,200 additional arrests.

The State Department's annual "Patterns of Global Terrorism" report lists countries which in the view of the United States sponsor or support "terrorism." It also contains an appendix analysing and discussing all the world's major clandestine organisations engaged in what the United

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Snow and rain add to expellees' plight

MARJ AL ZOHOOR, Lebanon (Agencies) — Nearly 400 Palestinians expelled by Israel huddled around gas heaters inside their tents Monday as a new winter snowstorm lashed their camp in southern Lebanon.

It was the fifth storm to hit since the men were expelled by Israel on Dec. 17.

"Cold is piercing our bones. Life is getting more and more miserable here," said the expelled spokesman, Dr. Abdul Aziz Rantisi. "When is the Security Council going to really do something about this resolution?"

The U.N. Security Council on Dec. 18 passed Resolution 799 condemning the expulsions and demanding that Israel repatriate the men.

The 15-nation body is expected to convene this week to consider action against Israel for refusing

to comply. The United States has tried to postpone the debate, fearing it may be forced into a veto to defend its ally from sanctions.

"We appeal to the Security Council to apply sanctions against Israel and urge the United States not to veto the sanctions," Dr. Rantisi told reporters.

The expellees have insisted that they be allowed back as a group without conditions. Dr. Rantisi said that talk in Israel of a possible compromise that would allow some of the men back immediately and reduce the length of deportation for others were unacceptable.

"I want (Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak) Rabin and (U.S. President Bill) Clinton to rest assured we will never accept anything other than the implementation of

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Hamdoun detects 'signals' of change coming from Washington

BAGHDAD (Agencies) — Iraq's U.N. ambassador says he has detected signals from Washington that may indicate President Bill Clinton is willing to open a dialogue.

But the ambassador, Nizar Hamdoun, cautioned against assuming prematurely the new U.S. administration would ease military tensions with Baghdad.

"There are some signals from the new administration that contain some objectivity. They say the new administration is turning to dialogue to avoid war," Mr. Hamdoun was quoted as saying on Monday by the official media.

He did not specify what the signals were, and added: "It is too early to assume that a change is in the offing. One has to wait for at least an initial move."

Mr. Hamdoun's remarks were his first on the matter since returning from New York last week for consultations after Iraq's goodwill gestures to the man who

replaced its arch-enemy George Bush.

Iraq's declaration of a ceasefire before Mr. Clinton's inauguration on Jan. 20 and offer of talks have so far been received coolly by Washington.

The United States, which under Mr. Bush spearheaded the Gulf war which drove Iraq out of Kuwait, was indicated it wants to see real changes in Baghdad before any change in U.S. policy.

Iraqi President Saddam Hussein, keen to break the grip of U.S.-backed, U.N. trade sanctions, has made clear he wants a new chapter in relations with Washington and the world body.

Baghdad-based diplomats said Washington appeared to be waiting for Iraq to make specific proposals as a sign of sincerity.

"It's not enough to say they want to talk — they will have to prove it to the Americans," said one European envoy.

The United States and its Brit-

3 killed in Gaza, W. Bank

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Two Palestinians were killed by Israeli troops when they allegedly fled from an army roadblock and a 12-year-old Palestinian boy died of wounds suffered in an earlier clash with soldiers, the army said Monday.

The boy, Hayel Youssef Abu Mekhaimeh, was shot Friday in the Gaza Strip's Khan Yunis refugee camp along with his mother who remains hospitalised, Palestinian reporters said.

Abu Mekhaimeh died Monday of his wounds in hospital, the army confirmed. Last month, five Palestinian children aged 11 to 16 were shot dead by troops within a week, prompting liberal cabinet minister Yossi Sarid to demand the army brief the government every time a minor is killed.

On Sunday, two 22-year-old Palestinian passengers were killed by gunfire on a car allegedly fleeing an army roadblock near the village of Fahme in the occupied West Bank, the army said. Soldiers opened fire after the driver ignored calls to halt, the army said. The driver was apparently wounded but managed to run away.

Army officials said the car was stolen and the men were not wanted for anti-Israeli violence. The victims were identified as Nasser Zaroussi and Mohammad Aboussi, both from Nabulus in the West Bank.

The three deaths brought to 1,025 the number of Palestinians killed by Israelis in the five-year uprising against occupation, according to an AP count.

Also Monday, the daily Hadashot said the army was making a training video to clarify open-fire orders for soldiers following reports many troops are uncertain when they are permitted to shoot.

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Cabinet reshuffle put off for now, but timing not the only factor in need for changes at top

By Nermeen Murad
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Talk of an immediate Cabinet reshuffle appears to be dying down following a statement by His Majesty King Hussein last week in which he said he saw no reason for delaying parliamentary elections scheduled for late this summer. But a major change in senior government posts is still expected for early in the spring to allow some members of the current Council of Ministers — ten of whom are serving deputies — to run in the next elections, according to officials and analysts.

NEWS ANALYSIS

Some Cabinet members and government observers had expected the reshuffle to come as early as the end of January, basing their expectations on predictions that Parliament's term would be extended and that high-level change in the top echelons of the bureaucracy was long overdue.

The prime minister, Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, formed his government in November 1991 with a message of continuity in Cabinet posts, and apparently

based on this he kept his original team without any change since then. But the government has come under increasing criticism for its performance, with many people, including Cabinet members themselves, saying that a reshuffle was needed to reassert leadership, improve team work and increase efficiency and productivity of various departments.

"The expectation (for a reshuffle) is off for now," said a well-informed source. "My hunch is that the reshuffle will now take place in March or April, where a more technocratic government can be formed to prepare for the elections," he said.

The Election Law requires senior government officials to resign their posts at least 65 days before the elections date if they want to run. Moving the date of the reshuffle forward for two months, however, will also mean that Sharif Zeid's government will continue to bear criticism from the different political circles and tolerate "inefficiency" from and "friction" among some of its members.

While political analysts and some government insiders have pointed to the government's recent behaviour as if it were in "transition," meaning



Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker

that the government is avoiding taking difficult decisions, senior officials reject this charge maintaining that the government has a good record in decision making. Some of the officials, however, openly admit to being unable to always translate decisions and policies into practical programmes.

"The Cabinet seems to be divided into different factions and groups, as well as strong-minded individuals, who operate on personal consideration rather than on the basis of common good," a well-informed source said. "Besides a Cabinet member can be in

full agreement with his colleague's point of view but would vote against it just to discredit him."

This and other sources who agree with him point to another "failing," which they contend has kept the government from carrying out its programme over the past year.

"The government wants to appease everybody and in the process delays all important decisions," a prominent political activist said. "They have not been able to take decisions and make policies," he continued. "Some Cabinet members are just playing things by ear and their position in the government has all of a sudden become a temporary stop for them."

The senior officials, who spoke to the Jordan Times, say this criticism of the government's performance is unjustified, pointing to the Cabinet's economic and monetary record in particular, which "shows that the government can take difficult decisions," as one of them put it.

"On the economic and monetary level, our performance has been excellent," that senior official said. "In other areas, it is not so black and white, it is true."

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Budget

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Afghan rivals fight despite peace call

KABUL (R) — The Afghan government and its radical opponents bombed and shelled each other's positions around Kabul Sunday, despite an agreement reached by six Mujahadeen groups that called for a ceasefire.

President Burhanuddin Rabbani's government said it would continue its 13-day-old offensive against the Hezb-e-Islami Party of hardline Mujahadeen leader Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.

The Hezb said the government had been defeated and appealed to Kabul citizens to force it to remove heavy artillery from the capital, to spare civilians from being hurt in counter-attacks.

Both sides claimed victories in the day's battles and, in public statements, appeared to be taking a harder line.

In the eastern Afghan town of Jalalabad, six Mujahadeen groups including the Hezb agreed on a peace formula calling for a ceasefire and elections in less than a year. Mujahadeen sources in neighbouring Pakistan said.

They said Pakistani and Saudi ambassadors had brokered the formula, which called for elections within a year and envisaged the revival of a leadership council representing nine main Mujahadeen parties.

Mr. Rabbani says the council ceased to exist after the convening of a controversial assembly last month that elected him president for two years and created an interim parliament.

A presidential spokesman in Kabul called the Jalalabad session, where Mr. Rabbani's Jamiat-e-Islami was absent, "just a meeting of a few influential people."

Spokesman Abdul Aziz Morad said the Hezb must surrender all heavy weapons to the government as a condition for a ceasefire.

"The Islamic state of Afghanistan is determined to continue the mopping up operations until the last forces of Gulbuddin's terrorist section have been crushed," a Defence Ministry spokesman said.

The Hezb fired four rockets into Kabul Sunday, killing one person and wounding another, the official Kabul Radio said.

A Defence Ministry source, quoted by Kabul Radio, said the government jets and artillery hit Hezb positions in the bagranni areas southwest of Kabul.

"The aerial and artillery attacks will continue until Gulbuddin Hekmatyar's rocket positions there are destroyed," the broadcast said.

Many people were seen fleeing from western Kabul's Bagh-e-Bala area after heavy overnight fighting in a separate conflict pitting government forces against the Hezb-e-Wahdat Party of the Shiite Muslim minority.

Many patients at Kabul's Karte Se Hospital had been injured by machinegun, rocket or tank fire.

A 14-year-old girl lay in the hospital's intensive care unit her face badly cut by rocket shrapnel Saturday night. "Her mother and three brothers and sisters were all killed, but we have not told her about them," her aunt said at her bedside.

At least 1,700 people have been injured in the current fighting, which has lasted almost two weeks, hospital doctors said.

There is no official estimate of the number of people killed because their bodies were not brought to hospitals, but doctors said the total could be in hundreds.

The six parties in Jalalabad accepted King Fahd's invitation to Mojahadeen groups last week to meet in Saudi Arabia to settle their differences, Mujahadeen sources said.

Noorullah Emad, an envoy of Mr. Rabbani, said in Pakistan Saturday that the Kabul government had also agreed to the Saudi proposal but "now we are busy in Afghanistan."

The present Kabul fighting erupted on Jan. 19 after the government launched an anti-Hezb sweep to forestall what it called the party's plans to attack Kabul.

The Hezb has repeatedly clashed with government forces since the Mujahadeen took power last April from a collapsed former communist government after 14 years of civil war.

The Kabul government meanwhile urged the rebellious Hezb fundamentalists to Mr. Hekmatyar, and open direct talks to end the two-week-old siege of the embattled capital.

In its Pashto-language broadcast Sunday night and Monday, state-run Kabul Radio said peace will never come to the Afghan capital as long as Mr. Hekmatyar was the leader of the fundamentalist Hezb-e-Islami faction.



Burhanuddin Rabbani

"There can be no peace talks with a Hezb-e-Islami which is led by Hekmatyar," Afghan Deputy Foreign Minister Najibullah Lafraie said in the radio appeal to Hezb-e-Islami.

Mr. Hekmatyar's forces began shelling the city in mid-December after a national assembly of tribal elders, Islamic scholars and prominent rebel commanders rejected Mr. Rabbani for another two-year term.

But at least six of the 10 rebel chiefs, including Mr. Hekmatyar, accused Mr. Rabbani of vote-buying and charged the council was bogus and not representative of the Afghan people.

Demirel avoids blaming Iran for murders

ANKARA (R) — Turkish Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel said Sunday security forces would throw light this week on a series of political murders over the past three years.

He avoided direct answers to questions about alleged Iranian involvement in the killings, but said nothing at a news conference to dispel suspicion that such a connection existed.

"We must be very careful and have very accurate information before attributing any blame to Iran as a state," Mr. Demirel said.

He said Iran and Turkey had very friendly relations and a "very sensitive situation" would arise if the security forces determined that Tehran was implicated in the murders.

"What goal would Iran reach by setting up a murder network in Turkey? I don't credit this," Mr. Demirel said.

He said investigations of the murders were almost complete and security forces would make an announcement by Wednesday.

"I think present information will help us to reach (Ugur) Mumcu's killers," Mr. Demirel said. Mumcu, a left-wing journalist and researcher, was killed last Sunday by a powerful car bomb.

The prime minister said light would also be thrown on the previously unsolved killings of four other prominent figures known for staunchly secular views, Cen Emecek, Turan Dursun, Bahriye, Ucock and Muzaffer Aksoy, in the past three years.

Hundreds of thousands of Turks shouted anti-Iranian slogans at marches last week to protest against Mumcu's assassination.

Iranian opposition leader Masoud Rajavi urged Mr. Demirel to punish the perpetrators and close "the mullahs' nests of terror and espionage and their representations in Turkey."

"If (Iran) has carried out more than 50 assassinations against Iranian refugees in Turkey alone, it is a well-known fact that this regime is involved in the assassination of nationals of other countries and also Turkish citizens such as Ugur Mumcu," Mr. Rajavi said in a message to Mr. Demirel.

The Iranian embassy has denied any involvement in Mumcu's murder and Iranian Interior Minister Abdollah Nouri said in Ankara last week that Iran had never supported terrorism.

MIDDLE EAST NEWS IN BRIEF

Police officer killed by Algerian militants

ALGIERS (R) — Three Muslim fundamentalist gunmen mowed down a local Algerian police chief in his car in the western town of Oran Sunday, Algerian Radio reported. Security forces shot and killed one of the attackers on the spot and arrested the two others, the official radio said. The radio said the 53-year-old officer, whom it did not name, was attacked as he drove in his car close to his home in the Gametta residential district of Oran. It was the first such attack in Oran since fundamentalist violence erupted in the capital Algiers and other cities at the start of last year, killing about 210 security force members to date.

Iran, N. Korea sign telecom. deal

NICOSIA (R) — Iran will sell telecommunications equipment to North Korea and establish a direct satellite telephone link with it under an agreement signed Sunday, the Iranian news agency IRNA said. The deal was signed by the post and telecommunications ministers of the two countries, Mohammad Gharazi and Kim Hak-Sop, at the end of Mr. Kim's visit to Tehran, it said. Iran would offer training facilities for North Korean technicians and help modernise Pyongyang's postal system, the agency monitored in Nicosia, added.

Extremist killed in clash with Cairo police

CAIRO (AP) — A Muslim extremist was killed Sunday in an exchange of fire with police, the state-run Middle East News Agency reported. It said the extremist was killed in one of several ambushes set by police to hunt remaining militants in the Cairo district of Imbaba who attacked police patrols with fire bombs in the past week. Imbaba is a hotbed for active Muslim extremists that witnessed several bloody clashes with police. Several thousands of troops combed the area late last year and declared it clean. Quoting police sources, the agency said the extremist, identified only as an athlete named Magdi, opened fire at police when he realised that a police officer returned the fire. In addition to instantly wounding a police officer, the agency said Magdi was training his fellow militant in Karate. His death Sunday brought to four the number of people killed in extremist-related violence this year. Muslim militants were blamed for the killing of a Coptic Christian in southern Egypt on Jan. 5. Last year, 80 people were killed and 133 wounded in extremist-related violence.

Tehran asks India to compensate Iranians

NICOSIA (R) — Iran asked the Indian government Sunday to compensate Iranians for damages suffered during Hindu-Muslim clashes in Bombay, Iran's IRNA news agency said. Deputy Foreign Minister Manuher Mottaki, meeting India's Charge d'Affaires in Tehran P. Dayal, presented the demand and called for measures to ensure the safety of Iranians in Bombay. Mr. Dayal said his government intended to pay the Bombay Iranians for the damages, IRNA said. A 15-year-old Iranian was killed and dozens of Iranian shops were destroyed during 12 days of violence in Bombay in January in which more than 500 people died. The clashes followed heightened sectarian tensions across India since Hindu zealots destroyed a 16th century mosque in the northern town of Ayodhya in December.

16 Iranian youngsters die in accident

NICOSIA (R) — Six Iranian youngsters drowned when the frozen surface of a swimming pool on which they were ice-skating cracked, trapping them in freezing water, Iran's IRNA news agency reported Sunday. The victims were three girls and three boys aged 9 to 18, it said, quoting Etelaat newspaper for the accident which occurred in Karaj, 40 kilometres west of Tehran.

Religious Kuwaitis denounce satellite dishes as evil

By Diana Elias
The Associated Press

KUWAIT — It took Mohammad Al Misbah three days to convince the father of his fiancée that he would make a good husband and provide a decent home — even if he does own a satellite dish.

"He told me that if I wanted to marry his daughter, I'd have to sell the dish because it brings dirty movies into my house," Mr. Misbah explained.

The 25-year-old karate instructor and his relatives finally convinced his future father-in-law, a mosque preacher, that the dish is not an instrument of the devil.

Many religious Kuwaitis are campaigning against a satellite dish craze in the emirate, part of the post-Gulf war liberalisation that has dismayed fundamentalists.

They fear the spread of what they consider decadent western values among the emirate's predominantly Muslim population of 1.3 million.

The Muslim activists are seeking to introduce Islamic law "so how can we allow programmes that have not been censored by the Information Ministry?" asked Khaled Al Adwa, an Islamic parliament deputy.

He said satellite channels which "broadcast sex education will have catastrophic effects on the morals of our young people."

In neighbouring Saudi Arabia, Muslim zealots take potshots at dishes on roofs. In Kuwait, there have been a series of bombings at video stores in recent weeks.

Fundamentalists have taken to linking the dishes with AIDS, a tactic clearly designed to frighten Kuwaitis off acquiring the devices.

"Beware of setting the AIDS dish on the roof of your home to receive the customs and traditions of the infidels," said pamphlets left on doorsteps or telefaxed to firms which sell the dishes.

The two-page pamphlets, signed by "A group of honourable people," came complete with statistics on the number of AIDS and incest victims in the United States and claims that Sweden is considering legalising incest.

Despite the protests, sales of satellite dishes have more than tripled since the emirate was liberated in February 1991 after seven months of Iraqi occupation.

Before the invasion, Kuwaitis needed an Information Ministry permit to have a dish.

Now that has been waived and with more than 20 new companies competing for the burgeoning dish market, prices have tumbled and black metal dishes are sprouting on roofs.

Kuwaitis who stayed in the country during the Iraqi occupation and those who fled abroad developed a taste for uncensored television news and entertainment. In the more liberal post-war climate, they are reluctant to accept government — or Islamic — strictures.

Laila Ahmad, a young Muslim housewife, bought a dish against the wishes of her family because she was so bored at home.

"Those who want to go to the mosque can go and those who want to have fun can have fun," she said.

The most popular satellite channels are those offering news, the latest musical videos and movies. No-one cares what languages they are in.

Russian, Pakistani, Chinese and even Israeli channels are in great demand.

"Our TV programmes are dull. Even the children are sick of cartoon reruns," said Hussein Al Haddad, his eyes flicking from one screen to another in a store that sells dishes for monthly payments of \$130.

"We want entertainment. We went through enough sorrow during the invasion and the occupation," said Mr. Haddad, a 33-year-old civil servant.

Kuwait's censors routinely cut out love scenes from foreign movies and TV shows shown on the state-run network, sometimes even situations as innocuous as a father affectionately pecking his daughter on the cheek.

In one recent episode of the U.S. series "America's Funniest People," the censors scissored out a shot of an ape kissing the show's hostess.

Although press censorship was lifted about a year ago, some newspapers and magazines still draw clothes on photographs of women considered immodestly dressed by Islamic standards.

Salah Al Hashem, a lawyer and columnist, is not worried about the effects of uncensored programmes on his family because "it's all in how parents raise their children."

Mr. Hashem bought a dish last year and says he spends hours watching TV every day.

"It's a way of getting around the government's monopoly over information," he said.

Physician Aref Al Nakkas said: "Some news reports about our region have a way of never getting into our newspapers."

The only Kuwaitis who knew about the Iraqi troops massing on the border to August 1990 were the ones who had satellite dishes.

agency CARE have reduced the number of food kitchens they operate in Baidoa, and many other camps and kitchens are going to be closed, he said.

"We are requesting the international community to increase food and medicine...to give farmers seeds, tools and machinery...and to invest in rebuilding Somalia," Dr. Hussein said.

Above all, he said, U.S. and allied forces must disarm the gunners, many of whom have fled outside the city, to secure the future of the region.

The Red Cross and CARE said the governor's estimate of Baidoa's hungry is too high. They said they cut the number of kitchens because fewer Somalis were using them.

Relief agencies have been trying to switch from cooked food to kites to distributing dry food like maize or sorghum so Somalis can eat at home with their families. The kitchens were begun on a mass scale because people were being robbed of their dry rations.

The arrival of U.S. and allied troops has reduced the looting problem. The security umbrella the soldiers have provided has encouraged some Somali refugees to return to their home villages.

Baidoa's population, about 80,000 a few months ago, appears to be falling because

through the bush with her three surviving children. They were so emaciated they could barely sit up.

"We lost all our camels, cattle and goats and we cannot cultivate our farm — it is absolutely horrible," she said.

"There are still some people like me remaining there. Some are dying, and some are walking here."

Baidoa sees less death, but much suffering remains

By Edith M. Lederer
The Associated Press

BAIDOA — Habiba Tohow insisted on climbing onto the death truck making its morning rounds so she could watch over her five-year-old daughter Fardoo, wrapped in a small shroud on her final journey to the cemetery.

In a cemetery crowded with unmarked graves, Mrs. Tohow laid Fardoo to rest alongside a nameless child and three unknown adults picked up by the truck.

Such terrible personal tragedies continue every day in Baidoa, but fewer mothers like Mrs. Tohow are losing children. The massive international relief effort has cut the death toll dramatically in just four months.

In September, the death truck was picking up 350 bodies a day. This month gravediggers have been burying from five to 13 bodies a day, according to the Somali Red Crescent.

The expanding relief effort and the arrival of the U.S.

Marines on Dec. 16 have transformed Baidoa from a city of death to one of hope.

"The Marines have changed everything," said Hussein Dahir Ahmad, manager of the Red Crescent. "They have returned peace and tranquility to Baidoa."

The heavily-armed vehicles known as "technical" that used to roam the streets are gone, though some gunmen still ply their looting trade under cover of darkness. The market has quadrupled in size. Hundreds of orphans are learning their ABCs, and several schools are about to open. Teashops which closed at dusk now bustle until midnight.

Dr. Mohammad Ibrahim Hussein, the region's new governor, fears the dramatic drop in the death toll is starting a cutback in relief at a time when he believes 30 to 40 per cent of people in Baidoa and thousands more in the countryside are still starving.

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and the international relief



A U.S. soldier carries out a house-to-house search in Afgoi, 30 kilometres outside Mogadishu (AFP photo)

refugee camps are emptying. But no recent head counts have been taken.

While some refugees head to their villages to start a new life, Baidoa still remains a magnet for the sick and hungry.

Habiba Mohammad Abdul Rahman, 35, who watched five of her children die of starvation, arrived a few days ago after a 60-kilometres trek

U.S., Israel end the nuclear lies

By Seymour Hersh

GEORGE BUSH left President Bill Clinton a maze of unresolved foreign policy horrors from Haiti to the Balkans, but at its end his team was making progress in one essential area — coming to terms with a nuclear-armed Israel and ending a 25-year policy of hypocrisy.

American and Israeli officials began secret talks last year over the future of Israel's big nuclear arsenal — talks aimed at ending the production of weapons-grade plutonium at the main Israeli nuclear reactor at Dimona in the Negev desert.

The official position of the United States and its nuclear allies is, astonishingly, that there is no positive evidence that Israel possesses nuclear arms. Since the late Sixties, when Israel began manufacturing nuclear weapons, American presidents publicly saw no evil, heard no evil and spoke no evil about Israel's constantly expanding arsenal.

The fact that Israel and America are now officially talking about Israel's bombs should end the increasingly shabby lies that have eviscerated the Third World nations to forgo development of nuclear weapons.

An important first step in the disarmament process took place on Jan. 13 in Paris, when Israel and 143 other nations formally signed a treaty that calls for the destruction for all chemical weapons over the next 12 years.

U.S. officials described the little-known Israeli participation as a significant first step in building Israeli confidence in the disarmament process. On May 29, 1991, President Bush announced a new Middle East arms control initiative that became the basis for the current talks. One proposal called on the states in the region "to implement a verifiable ban on the production and acquisition of weapons-usable nuclear material" such as enriched uranium or separated plutonium.

A working group was assembled under two senior State Department officials, Frank Wisner and Robert Gallucci, both of whom are apparently staying on in the Clinton administration.

Over the past few months, informed officials said, the U.S. team has been working out procedures for verifying an Israeli stoppage of nuclear production. One requirement was that there be no on-site inspection of the Israeli nuclear reactor.

Officials said the U.S. was confident it could verify reactor activity and production with external equipment such as satellites with sensors.

Those states on the threshold of going nuclear — and there are as many as 40 other nations that could go nuclear in the next generation — will watch the Clinton administration's treatment of Israel with interest. If there is no significant and continuing effort to defuse the nuclear issue in the Middle East, Washington will have seriously diminished its ability to limit the emergence of independent nuclear powers — The Observer.

JORDAN TELEVISION	
Tel: 77311-19	
PROGRAMME TWO	
18:00	Michael Vailanti
18:30	La Famille Ramad
19:00	News in French
19:15	Reportage
19:30	News in Hebrew
20:30	News in Arabic
21:10	The Dirtywater Dynasty
22:00	News in English
22:30	Big Man
PRAYER TIMES	
05:06	Fajr
10:25	(Sunrise) Duha
11:49	Dhuhr
14:48	Asr
17:13	Maghreb
18:33	Isha
CHURCHES	
St. Mary of Nazareth Church Switish, Tel. 810740	
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 632785	
St. Joseph Church Tel. 634590	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440	
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757	
Terraviva Church Tel. 622366	
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541	
Anglican Church Tel. 63051, Tel. 628543	
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331	
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261	
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751	
Armenian International Church Tel. 622018	
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811295	
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 63304, 654932	
The Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691	
Church of the Redeemer — Tel. 638526	
WEATHER	
Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology	
It will be cold, cloudy and rainy, with snow falling on areas 700 metres above sea level. Winds will be north-westerly fresh and gust at times. In Aqaba, it will be partly cloudy and showery, with southerly fresh winds and rough seas.	
Min./Max. temp.	
Amman	1/1
Aqaba	8/14
Deserts	n/4
Jordan Valley	7/10
Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 6, Aqaba 16. Humidity readings: Amman 99 per cent, Aqaba 48 per cent.	

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Ghaleb Zawaideh 736011

Dr. Mohammed Al Azach 729771

Dr. Yousef Rashid 896301

Dr. Mukhlis Zawaideh 820425

Firas pharmacy 661912

Fordons pharmacy 770336

Al Asena pharmacy 637655

Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

Al Sakam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shumaisa pharmacy 637664

Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

Najib pharmacy 847632

ERBID:

Dr. Ayman Abu Sheikh (—)

Aqaba pharmacy (—)

ZARQA:

Dr. Wael Abu Zaid 986632

Khalil pharmacy 985417

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Department 661111

Civil Defence Immediate

Rescue 630341

Civil Defence Emergency 199

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 891228

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 643402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630321

Hot/L Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage 897467

Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality 897467

Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs 623101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 660100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 08-33300

Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussein Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 642214/6

Akiled Maternity, J. Amn 642441/2

Jahat Amman Hospital 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shamsani 664171/4

Shamsani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Muasher Hospital 667277/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666127/37

Al-Abdi, Abdali 664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajra 777101/3

Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafich 775111/26

Army, Marja 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 60224050

Amal Hospital 2345

ZARQA:

Zarga Govt. Hospital (09)983323

Zarga National Hospital (09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990

ERBID:

Princess Beena Hospital (02)25555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)27275

The Al Nafess Hospital (02)34700

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital (03)314111

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International

House to discuss call for mandatory voting

AMMAN (J.T.) — Wednesday's Lower House of Parliament agenda includes a proposal by 19 deputies calling for an amendment to the Election Law of 1986 which would make voting in general elections mandatory for all eligible citizens, according to an announcement Monday.

The proposal said an amendment to the Election Law should also grant the right to vote to 18-year-old Jordanians.

A proposal submitted by 40 deputies, demanding that Jordan adopt a special law banning the Kingdom from closing its borders with any neighbouring Arab country or imposing a sea, land or air trade embargo on Arab states, will also be discussed Wednesday, according to the announcement.

The House will also take up the topic submitted by Deputy Mansour Murad calling on the government to entrust the Audit Bureau with direct control of the funds owned by and at the disposal of the General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS).

A report by the House Foreign Relations Committee on Palestine and the crisis sparked by Israel's Dec. 17 expulsion of more than 400 Palestinians will also be reviewed, the announcement said.

The House Judiciary Committee will convene Saturday to discuss an amendment to the country's Municipalities Law of 1992 and the Temporary Landlord and Tenant Law of 1982, another statement said.

Cold, wet weather to stay

AMMAN (J.T.) — The cold, rainy and snowy weather currently affecting the Kingdom is likely to continue until Thursday in most regions, with rain continuing in the southern parts of Jordan on Friday, according to a statement by the Department of Meteorology Monday.

The statement said a depression centered over Cyprus is affecting areas east of the Mediterranean region, bringing heavy rain and snow to high mountainous areas.

Snow was expected early Tuesday morning in regions rising 1,000 metres above sea level, but rain was expected to affect most other areas of Jordan, the statement said.

The statement said a colder air mass was expected to affect Jordan Tuesday evening, causing snow fall in regions rising 700 metres above sea level, and a further drop in temperatures.

According to the department, the snow storm will be accompanied by gale-force winds especially in the mountainous regions of the country, while temperatures will be around 0°C.



His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan meets Monday with FAFO officials from Norway to discuss a new concept of security (Petra photo)

Prince Hassan calls for new concept of security

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan Monday emphasised the need to bring about a change in the concept of security, away from its limited traditional view based on armament, and towards a comprehensive view that embodies humanitarian, economic, environmental and health dimensions.

The Prince addressed a visiting four-member team representing FAFO, a research centre for applied science based in Norway.

He told the group, at a meeting at the Royal Scientific Society (RSS), that FAFO's activities contributed towards promoting

the cause of world peace.

The FAFO team reviewed a working paper prepared by Prince Hassan on the concept of common security which advocates security not in terms of the military or the absence of war, but rather ensuring economic, environmental, health, humanitarian and cultural security.

King gives JPA land for new site

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter



Suleiman Al Qudah

AMMAN — At the instructions of His Majesty King Hussein, the Ministry of Youth announced the assignment of a two-dunum plot of land to the Jordan Press Association (JPA).

The announcement was made by JPA President Suleiman Qudah who, accompanied by the JPA board, called on Minister of Youth Saleh Al-Sheikh Monday to express the association's appreciation to the King and government for the gift.

Mr. Qudah told the Jordan Times that the JPA board will begin planning for the construction of a permanent headquarters for the association and a press club on the plot, located near the Martyrs' Monument.

In a statement quoted by the Jordan News Agency, Petra, Mr. Qudah said the generous offer reflects King Hussein's appreciation of the important role of the Jordanian press which, he added, has assumed added importance under the umbrella of democracy.

Mr. Qudah said that the King

has repeatedly expressed his desire to see this project implemented.

A permanent headquarters for the press will enable the JPA to host meetings with individuals from Jordan and abroad, and serve as an effective forum for reflecting King Hussein's appreciation of the important role of the Jordanian press which, he added, has assumed added importance under the umbrella of democracy.

He said endeavours are already underway to raise the required sums to finance this important project.

ICARDA assesses regional projects

AMMAN (J.T.) — Jordan's cooperation with the Aleppo-based International Centre for Agricultural Research in Dry Areas (ICARDA) was reviewed here Monday by Agriculture Minister Fayez Khasawneh and a seven member ICARDA team.

Dr. Khasawneh said Jordan is eager to promote cooperation to increase food production. ICARDA has a number of projects in Jordan, Syria and other Middle East countries aimed at increasing agricultural produce and improving farming in dry lands.

One of ICARDA's major activities is the Mashreq project: an agricultural venture involving Jordan, Iraq, Syria and ICARDA, and financed by the U.N. Development Programme (UNDP) and the Arab Fund for Economic and Social Development (AFESD).

According to Jihad Karadsh, head of the project in Jordan, the Mashreq scheme aims to increase the country's production of barley, forage and sheep in the critical zones which receive a maximum of only 300 millimetres of rain annually. He said the project focuses on transferring technology to farmers and sheep-owners.

ICARDA administers the project and provides the necessary technical know-how. Last September ICARDA held a meeting in Amman with delegates from the region, including Cyprus and Turkey, to assess the Mashreq project in the three Arab states.

Regional Coordinator for ICARDA Nasri Haddad told the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that the ICARDA team is currently touring the region to conduct an assessment of its operations and to look into possibilities of increasing its activities.

The ICARDA met with the Dean of the Agriculture Faculty at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), to discuss bilateral cooperation, and plans to visit the ICARDA regional office in Amman and the National Centre for Agricultural Research and Technology Transfer (NCARTT), in the Muthaqa area to discuss their activities and research programmes.

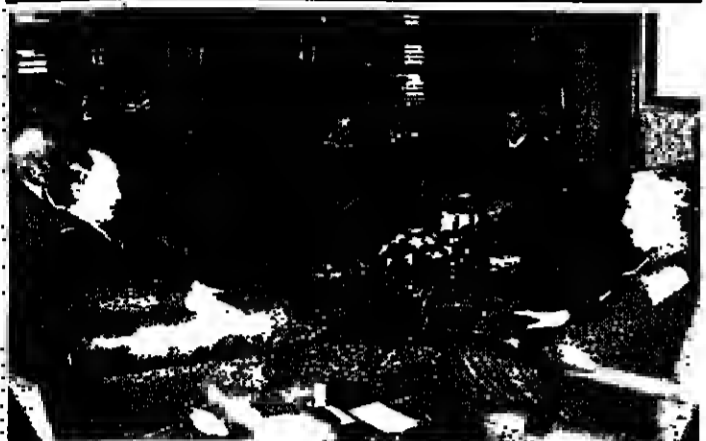
Dr. Haddad said the team also plans to visit the University of Jordan to discuss cooperation with its Technology Centre, which is involved in the production of seeds at the University's Faculty of Agriculture.



Inter. Continental honours tour agents, airlines

AMMAN — The Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel Sunday evening held a reception at the Crown Restaurant under the patronage of Minister of Tourism Yanal Hikmat to honour representatives of tourist agents and airlines operating in Jordan.

The minister and hotel General Manager Shawqi Ayoub presented award certificates to the guests whose organisations supported the activities of the hotel in the past year.



Field Marshal Fathi Abu Taleb meets with Cyprus British Forces Commander and the British ambassador to Jordan Monday at Army Headquarters

Abu Taleb meets visiting British commander

AMMAN (Petra) — Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Field Marshal Fathi Abu Taleb Monday received at the Jordan Armed Forces General Headquarters the commander of the British Forces in Cyprus, Major General A.F.C. Hunter.

Field Marshal Abu Taleb and the visiting British officer discussed Jordanian-British cooperation and issues of common interest.

On Sunday, Field Marshal Abu Taleb received the first deputy of the chief of staff of the Russian Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Andrei Nicolai, and reviewed scopes of Jordanian-Russian cooperation and issues of common interest.

Jordan, Britain hold joint exercises in the desert

AMMAN (AP) — Jordanian and British soldiers started joint exercises Monday in the Kingdom's central desert, a senior Jordanian officer said.

The last joint exercise was conducted in November 1992.

The officer, who cannot be identified by name under military rules, said at least 150 British soldiers and 640 Jordanian troops were participating in the "Saffron Sands" exercise near Qatana, 80 kilometres south of Amman.

He refused to give further details, but suggested the drills including parachuting and air cover could last more than three days.

A British military press spokesman, Major Rocky Hitchcock, told the Associated Press in a telephone interview from Cyprus that press invitations for the games were blocked by the Jordanian government last week.

"We regretfully had to withdraw press facilities," Maj. Hitchcock said. "I have no idea why they were cancelled."

Jordanian, U.S. universities to establish postgraduate courses on water studies

By Sausan Ghosheh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Director of the State of Washington's Water Research Centre and professor at Washington State University (WSU) William H. Funk is visiting Jordan with a team from WSU to set up better "linkage" between the University of Jordan and WSU.

Among the term's priorities is the establishment of a postgraduate degree programme in water studies between both universities, where students from Jordan will take courses at WSU and return to the Kingdom for research.

In the near future, Dr. Funk hopes this programme would expand to include bringing WSU students to Jordan for study and research.

In addition to student exchange, this programme offers exchange of scientists from both countries.

The WSU team is working with the Water and Environment Re-

search and Study Centre (WERSC) at the University of Jordan.

According to WERSC, its goal is to conduct "research on the development and management of water resources, and the protection of the environment from pollution and degradation."

The WSU team will be assisting the centre in developing a curriculum for water resource management.

Professor of soil physics at WSU David Mulla said: "There are very serious pollution problems in Jordan, and the Ministry of Water is very capable of designing strategies for dealing with those problems. However, there are some gaps in knowledge."

The WSU team and WERSC are working together to fill in these gaps.

For instance, one of their projects is to determine the quantities of organic chemicals in some of the waters.

This study is significant because some organic chemicals can be hazardous to the bacteria that

are used in treatment plants.

In addition to this project, Dr. Mulla said there will probably be a "significant amount of research into re-use of treated waste water for irrigation."

Dr. Funk said "we hope to develop other funding" to continue and extend this project. Funding is especially needed to purchase laboratory chemicals and equipment, in order to enable the laboratories in Jordan to perform more advanced studies and research.

WSU has had a history of cooperation with the University of Jordan.

Dr. Funk describes their work as joint participation and not as assistance.

He said: "We learn as much as we present... You have excellent human resources, you have a very well-educated, very capable faculty."

Dr. Funk concluded by saying that he hopes more conferences and workshops on this topic will be held, in order to better understand each other's problems.

Insulin drive launched for diabetics in Iraq

AMMAN (Petra) — The Arab Emergency Health Committee is launching a campaign to help Iraq's 400,000 diabetics get insulin.

According to committee spokesman Mamdouh Al Abbadi, 150,000 Iraqi diabetics are in immediate danger because of the lack of insulin in hospitals and health centres.

Addressing a press conference at the Professional Association Complex Sunday, Dr. Abbadi said the shortages resulted from the "unjust sanctions imposed on the Iraqi people for the past two years despite the fact that medical supplies and equipment are exempted. Dr. Abbadi urged the World Health Organisation

(WHO) and human rights societies around the world, as well as the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), to extend humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people.

The committee has bought quantities of insulin from European markets and plans to send the first shipment to Iraq in the coming week, Dr. Abbadi said.

He said the committee also plans to raise JD 100,000 to purchase insulin, and expressed hope that Jordanian citizens will back this campaign.

Dr. Abbadi said the 400,000 Iraqi diabetics require at least half a million doses of insulin annually.

Snow, rain add to evictees' woes

(Continued from page 1)
Resolution 799," Dr. Rantisi told reporters.

"On this we are firmer than the rocks surrounding us," snow fell on the camp at dawn and covered surrounding hills. Driving rain later Monday turned the windswept hillside camp into a muddy quagmire, flooding tents and soaking the expellees.

Despite the worsening weather, the Palestinians managed to receive jackets and vegetables smuggled to them on mules at night from villages in Lebanese government-held territory.

Dr. Rantisi accused the U.N. and U.S. of double standards in their dealing with Arabs and Israel but said he was confident Washington would not veto unprecedented sanctions against Israel.

He said Washington "would lose all its credibility and its Gulf war allies" if it used its veto at the Security Council.

WHAT'S GOING ON

The following listings are compiled from monthly bulletins and the daily Arabic press. Readers are advised to verify the listed time and place with the concerned institutions.

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition entitled "Modernist Still Life Photographed" at the American Centre.
- ★ Medical book exhibition at Al Bashir Hospital.
- ★ Exhibition of watercolour paintings by Syrian artist Nazir Nab'a at Baladna Art Gallery.
- ★ Plastic art exhibition by Ahd Bani Yassin and Nawwaf Mandeel at Deir Abee Saeed Girls' Secondary School.

ITALIAN FILM WEEK

- ★ English-subtitled Italian film entitled "Il Coraggio Di Parlare" (The Courage to Speak) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8 p.m.

HOME NEWS IN BRIEF

King visits Prime Ministry

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein visited Monday the Prime Ministry where he was received by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker, the deputy prime minister, the ministers of state and the secretary general of the Prime Ministry. King Hussein had a meeting with Sharif Zeid to discuss several domestic and foreign issues. The meeting was attended by Royal Court Chief Khaled Al Karaki.

Batalneh meets Al Bashir Hospital heads

AMMAN (Petra) — Health Minister Aref Al Batalneh visited Monday Al Bashir Hospital in Amman and met with the heads of its various departments and sections for talks on possible means of developing the medical services offered to citizens at the hospital. The minister was briefed on the hospital's needs and said the ministry will meet them in accordance with capabilities.

Students display talents in Irbid

IRBID (Petra) — A plastic art exhibition opened Monday at the exhibition hall of Irbid municipality. The week-long exhibition, which includes works by students at the fine arts department of Irbid Girls Community College, depicts natural scenery and national issues.

Irbid reviews past, future projects

IRBID (Petra) — A meeting was held Monday at Irbid governorate to review the achievements in the past and future projects. Irbid Governor Fayez Al Abbadi, who chaired the meeting, called on the concerned authorities in the governorate to intensify their efforts to provide the best services to citizens.

Health centre opens in Petra

PETRA (Petra) — A new health centre was opened Monday in the ancient Nabatean city of Petra by Health Minister Aref Al Batalneh. The centre, which will offer medical services to the local residents of the area, as well as tourists, will be staffed by one doctor and one nurse. Dr. Batalneh said the centre was provided with all the necessary medical equipment and medicines. He said the ministry is always eager to offer medical services to citizens in all parts of Jordan. The ministry, he said, has appointed an orthopaedist and gynaecologist at the nearby Wadi Musa Comprehensive Health Centre. On Monday, Dr. Batalneh attended Arbor Day celebrations at Wadi Musa, where 1,000 forest tree saplings were planted by citizens.

Ramtha health officials meet on plans

RAMTHA (Petra) — The Ramtha Health Department held a meeting Monday under the chairmanship of its director Atallah Al Doujan and discussed its achievements and educational development plans. Mr. Doujan stressed the importance of well-prepared educational plans and the need to follow-up on their implementation.

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975

الاردنية

Chairman of the Board of Directors:
MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:
MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:
GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,
University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 661242

The Jordan Times is published daily except Fridays.
Subscription and advertising rates are available from the
Jordan Times advertising department.

Half solutions won't do

ISRAELI PRIME Minister Yitzhak Rabin appears to be feeling the heat from Washington this time over the non-compliance of his government with U.N. Security Council Resolution 799 demanding the return of the Palestinian expellees.

But he is offering half measures to defuse the stand-off with the U.S. and the rest of the international community.

First, Rabin was propagating the argument that the international community should await the final judgement of its high court on the issue of expulsions before the Security Council entertains applying sanctions against it.

Some Western leaders including President Clinton took this Israeli bait and decided to lobby for postponement of any international forceful action against Israel in deference to a possible positive intervention by the Israeli judiciary. Now, however, the entire world, including the new U.S. president, knows the fate of that Israeli tactical move and realise that it was intended only to gain time.

As the stand-off between Israel and the Security Council continued, the supporters of Israel on this issue have been effectively left with no more pretexts to prolong the agonies of the Palestinian expellees stranded now for more than 40 days and nights in no-man's land. So Rabin is making additional "over-tures" to ease the pressure on his government and other foreign governments which sympathised with him at a considerable cost to their credibility and fairness. One of these latest Israeli tactics is to allow a few Palestinians to return as part of a "goodwill" gesture aimed to head off international punitive actions against Israel.

This kind of partial solutions should be rejected outright simply because Resolution 799 is not subject to partial or piecemeal implementation. Any favourable response to Israeli manoeuvring would therefore do grave injustice to the international organisation and stands to undermine its reputation and authority.

There is but one solution to the dispute between Israel and the comity of nations at large and that is to accept the judgement of the Security Council and implement it in full. Given the bankruptcy of the Israeli thesis that expelling more than 400 Palestinians would end the cycle of violence in the occupied Palestinian territories, as evidenced by the new wave of attacks against Israeli army soldiers, Israel must look for more effective ways to achieve peace at home and abroad. One sure way to do this is to make peace with its neighbours on the basis of justice and legitimacy. Anything short of that would only extend the cycle of violence and endanger the security of, above all, Israel itself.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

THERE ARE indications that the scheduled U.N. Security Council session to deal with the question of the expellees will not take place in view of the U.S. pressure exercised on the Arab parties, said Al Dustour Arabic daily Monday. It is no secret also that the United States has been exercising pressure on the Security Council itself to prevent any debate on this issue for fear of exposing Israel to a confrontation with the United Nations, said the daily. Indeed, Washington has been demanding that the council wait until the Israeli High Court of Justice has issued its ruling, but since that court has already declared its verdict it would be difficult for Washington to continue to provide protection to Israel and its practices and its disregard of the council's resolutions, the paper continued. The U.S. administration is trying to avoid the use of the veto at any council session that condemns Israel or tries to impose punitive measures on the Jewish state for its present position, the paper added. Yet, by doing so, Washington is disrupting the work of the world organisation and tampering with its credibility while, at the same time, encouraging Israel to pursue mal-practices against the Palestinians, the paper added. The paper said that Washington's tactics behind the scene have serious implications because they aim at forcing the world organisation to grant Israel special rights and privileges not enjoyed by any other nation on earth, and backing the Jewish state's refusal to respect the world community's rules.

THE GOVERNMENT'S decision to hike the price of bread by 10 fils per kilogramme came under fire by columnist Saleh Al Qallab in Al Dustour daily. The government should have studied this measure very carefully before applying it since bread constitutes the main staple for the majority of the Jordanian families, said the writer. Some might say that 10 fils a kilo would not affect the standard of living in this country, but those who say this do not belong to the majority of people living around the poverty line, he said. The writer said that many large families, whose children sometimes go to sleep on empty stomachs and who seldom smell meat and live on tea and bread for many days, will find it hard to cope under the newly-added burdens. When the government raised the price of diesel oil last year, it was the poor who suffered most; with the hike of the prices of bread, the poor who from the majority, will face more hardships, added the writer. We realise the motives behind hiking the price of bread, with the current difficult circumstances facing the Kingdom, said the writer, but there definitely are other commodities, not so essential, whose price could have been raised without affecting the poor majority.

The View from Fourth Circle

What shall triumph on this mountain — composure or emotion?

The ongoing diplomatic tug-of-war over the fate of the Palestinians expelled by Israel to southern Lebanon appears to be a rather straightforward contest between Palestinian obstinacy and Israeli intransigence. On the surface, the odds seem heavily stacked against the Palestinians, given the overall dependency status and weakness of the Arab World and the traditional reluctance of the United States, and the West in general, to force Israeli compliance with United Nations Security Council resolutions. As we have come to learn, however, in the Holy Land and the wider Middle East things are rarely what they appear to be. This is a land of mysticism, desert mirages, miracles, holy writs for a global audience, allegories, parables, and prophecy, a land where tangible events and objects before our eyes more often than not relate to far greater visions and deeper passions. So it is with Israel and the Palestinians in southern Lebanon.

The Palestinians in southern Lebanon are symbols of several human, political and historical processes that the Israelis should fear, the Arabs should welcome and the Americans probably don't much care about as long as they have enough oil to power their drive-in churches and all-night taco stands.

On the human level, this is a battle whereby the Palestinians, refreshingly and mightily supported by the Lebanese government, once again show that they are prepared to suffer and pay the price of nationhood. The Palestinian-Lebanese posture in this standoff is quite novel in terms of contemporary Arab history, because it reflects a willingness to struggle, suffer and endure deprivation, rather than a reflexive submission to the comforts of the flesh, the dictates of the dollar, and the exigencies of foreign protection. This is not surprising. Since the early 1980s, the combination of Lebanese and Palestinian resistance to Israeli military might and distorted American diplomatic power has been at the forefront of what I have referred to as the Arab reawakening — the ongoing struggle for a more decent, equitable and durable Arab political order based on just militarism and autocracy and on more social and economic justice, authentic national identity, and personal dignity.

On the historical level, this standoff symbolises a turning point in the very essence of the Palestinian-Zionist and Arab-Israeli conflicts that have defined our last century of Middle Eastern history: Israel's physical expulsion of Palestinians from the land of Palestine, its disregard for international law and norms and its imposition of political realities on neighbouring Arab states. The 20th century saw the short-term triumph of Zionist ideology and goals and the disenfranchisement and dispersal of the Palestinians, but the 21st century — which effectively started with the collapse of communism and apartheid in 1990/1991 — promises to witness victory for the Palestinians in terms of the implementation of Palestinian national rights alongside Israel.

The above two human and historical factors combine to create the third, or political, process at hand, which is basically threefold: that Israel must comply with international law and U.N. resolutions like all other countries must do; that the United States cannot perpetually champion, fund, excuse and rationalise blatant aggression, predatory violence, and the self-anointed racism and superior political morality of its friend and ally Israel,

regardless of the mumbo-jumbo of "special relationships", the offensive presumptuousness of an Israeli/Jewish "higher morality", or the very serious, quantifiable and mercantile business of urban electoral politics in the United States; and that the security and stability of the Middle East should be assured through a political settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict that effectively treats the Palestinians and Israelis as equals in human terms, which ultimately will translate into a parallel political parity. Israel started off as a British promise of "a national home" in Palestine and now is a powerful and predatory state. The idea of a Palestinian state today will similarly become a reality in time, though one hopes without the militaristic edge of the Israeli state. The point is, to seek modest, transitional goals today does not rule out — and probably guarantees — the attainment of national rights and aspirations in the longer term.

The current political process started in late 1991 with the question of the United States' \$10 billion loan guarantees for Israel, which Washington delayed and fudged until Israel indicated that its programme of American-funded Jewish colonialism in the West Bank and Gaza would slow down or perhaps even be frozen. In this latest round, a similar political process is at work: the world insists that Israel cannot continue such blatant and inhuman denial of Palestinian rights, whether individual human rights or collective national rights.

The United States is caught in an uncomfortable position because it appears to finance and excuse Israel's political and moral violence against the Palestinians at a time when Washington is the driving force behind collective action through the United Nations to stop similarly offensive transgressions, violence, and rights denials in other parts of the world.

Israel's short-term problem is that its emotional stranglehold over the West is slowly becoming unbending, as its old tricks no longer impress: it cannot lay claim to higher political or ideological rights on the basis of the persecution and mass suffering of Jews in Europe half a century ago, because it is the strong party today doing the persecution and inflicting the suffering on Arabs; it cannot sell itself and its services as the best friend against the penetration of communism in the Middle East, because communism has rolled over and died; it cannot perpetuate the fantasy of its role as a potential protector of Arab oil for the use of the western industrialised democracies, because the western industrialised democracies are now doing their own protection; it can no longer sell the racism and phoney tales of 19th century European colonialism, tales of pioneering Jews who are making the desert bloom in an empty land devoid of Palestinian Arabs, because the vitality and reality of Palestinian identity has imposed itself on the consciousness of the world in a dramatic way; and it has little chance of success in securing exaggerated western sympathy, cash or credible apologies on the basis of claiming that it is morally threatened by powerful Arab armies, because most of those armies are fighting Israel a lot less these days, in favour of fighting their own people, fighting one another, or fighting the western superpowers.

Israel is trying to deal with these very serious constraints by creating a new and frightening spectre: Islamic fundamentalism,

or, if Israel can have its way, Islam in general, and Arab Islam in particular. The ruse may work, especially as the United States, and some others in the West, seem to need an external threat against which they can direct their deep fried chicken commercialism and their abhorrent sense of global self-importance. If it works, however, it should not be aided by our own Arab emotionalism, diplomatic incompetence and baste.

The same political, human and historical forces that have brought Israel to its present uncomfortable situation will continue to pressure it to comply with U.N. resolutions and the consensus political morality of the international community. It is interesting to hear American officials consistently talk of what Iraq must do if it wishes to "rejoin the community of civilised nations" or something along those lines. The fact is, the rest of the world is asking more or less the same question vis-a-vis Israel and its financiers-guardians-apologists in Washington: when will Israel finally live by the same rules as other countries, and implement U.N. resolutions with the same compulsion impressed on many other countries in the world?

They will try to ignore this reality in Washington and Israel, but they cannot ignore it for very long without looking really foolish. Our job is to maintain the world's focus on the double-standards that pertain here, keep pointing out the facts, pile on the diplomatic pressure and continue forcing humankind's and history's inexorable quest for stability and order based on justice. The best place to do all of these things is in the currently paused Arab-Israeli peace talks. Our hearts and hopes are with the men living in tents in southern Lebanon, but we have to resist the temptation that Israel is dangling before us, which is to submit to emotionalism and to break off the peace talks unless all the expelled Palestinians are returned home.

The fact is, expulsions of Palestinians are among the last gasps of the old Middle Eastern order and Israel's old 20th century deceptions. They are acts and symbols of the old ways that are now failing, and that — like apartheid and communism — will gradually unravel and crumble under the weight of their own audacity, unnaturalness and inhumanity. The new ways and the more lasting structures of national identity and regional stability will be devised in part at the Middle East peace talks, as well as in the minds and living rooms of Arabs, Muslims, Semites and other Middle Easterners throughout this region.

When the emotional pressures of the present push us to the edge of anger and despair, and the frightening reality of our fragmentation and dependence drive us towards total disillusionment, and the harsh violence of Zionism tempts us to respond to experiences and pause for a moment of analysis. We should then make an extra effort to summon the counterbalancing composure of historical process, or else be doomed to do this again next year, on another mountain, with yet another cast of Israeli and American politicians who look at us with fear, disbelief and disdain, but who do not see us as human beings.

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With its uranium shells, Desert Storm may have sown death

By Eric Hoskins

AMMAN, Jordan — The Gulf war lives on, as this week's air strikes against Iraq have proved. But the conflict goes beyond Iraqi missile batteries in forbidden places. It extends frighteningly to radioactive artillery shells used by the coalition forces two years ago. The spent rounds may be the cause of fatal illnesses, including cancer and mysterious new stomach ailments, showing up in Iraqi children.

Due to sanctions and war, the death rate of children under five has tripled. In the first eight months 1991 alone, 50,000 children died.

Known as depleted uranium penetrators, the shells were developed by the Pentagon in the late 1970s as anti-tank, armor-piercing projectiles. Depleted uranium, which makes up the shell's core, is a radioactive by-product of the enrichment process used to make atomic bombs and nuclear fuel rods. The material is extremely hard and abundant and provided free to weapons manufacturers by the nuclear industry. When fired, the core bursts into a searing flame that helps pierce the armor of tanks and other military targets. Diesel vapors inside the tank are ignited and the crew is burned alive.

In the six-week land war against Iraq, U.S. and allied coalition tanks, artillery and attack planes fired at least 10,000 of the 150-millimetre 2.7- to 3.6-kilogramme shells. A confidential report by United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority, written in April 1991 and leaked to the London newspaper The Independent in November of that year, estimates that at least 40 tonnes of depleted uranium were dispersed in Iraq and Kuwait during the war.

Among other things, the depleted uranium rounds forced the Pentagon to concede additional friendly-fire casualties when traces of radioactivity were found on destroyed coalition military vehicles. Iraqi forces did not have uranium penetrators.

While it is too early to prove a link, many health experts suspect that the postwar increase in childhood cancer and mysterious swollen abdomens is due, at least in part, to the radioactive shells. United Nations personnel and aid workers have seen children playing with empty shells, abandoned weapons and destroyed tanks. In Basra, a foreign doctor saw a child using depleted uranium shells as hand puppets.

The Pentagon insists that depleted uranium is "very, very mildly radioactive" and that the shells are not radioactive enough to be classified as a "radiological weapon." It has claimed that

allied tank crews firing the rounds received little radiation, the equivalent of a chest X-ray each day.

Most doctors and scientists agree that even mild radiation is dangerous and increases one's risk of cancer. More important, the health risk becomes much greater once the projectile has been fired.

After being fired, the broken shells release uranium particles in the air. The airborne particles enter the body easily. The uranium then deposits itself in bones, organs and cells.

Children are especially vulnerable because their cells divide rapidly as they grow. In pregnant women, absorbed uranium can cross the placenta into the bloodstream of the fetus.

In addition to its radioactive dangers, uranium is chemically toxic, like lead, and can damage the kidneys or lungs. Perhaps the fatal epidemic of swollen abdomens among Iraqi children is caused by kidney failure resulting from uranium poisoning. Whatever the effect of the depleted uranium shells, it is made worse by malnutrition and poor health conditions.

The British report called the presence of depleted uranium in Iraq and Kuwait a "significant problem," concluding that there is enough uranium there to cause "tens of thousands of potential deaths."

Fortunately, there have been no reports of uranium-related illnesses in Kuwait. That may be because fewer uranium shells were used there — most of the heavy ground fighting took place in southern Iraq — and because the country was cleaned up after the war.

The danger posed by the uranium shells is widely recognised. In July, German authorities arrested Siegfried Gunther, director of the Albert Schweitzer Institute, when he arrived in Berlin carrying a spent round retrieved from Iraq; he was charged with illegally "releasing ionising radiation." The shell, its radioactivity confirmed by two laboratories, was sealed in a lead-lined box. Needless to say, there are not many lead-lined boxes in Iraq. It is likely that the depleted uranium may have already contaminated soil and drinking water in Iraq. If this is the case, Iraqis could be exposed to the radioactive and toxic effects of uranium for generations to come.

Certainly such fears are not without foundation. In New Mexico, where uranium rounds are test-fired by the military, questions have been raised concerning ground-water poisoning. In 1986 James Parker, then associate director of the Bureau of Land

Management, told Congress that land used to test these weapons could be permanently contaminated.

Despite the risks associated with depleted uranium, there has been virtually no public debate about its effects in Iraq. The U.N. Environment Programme, which has investigated the ecological damage of the Gulf war, has been remarkably silent. To date, no effort has been made to assess

the extent of radioactive contamination due to depleted uranium rounds in Iraq or to locate and remove the shells.

Although the U.S. Congress has ordered the military to monitor the health of soldiers exposed to smoke from Kuwaiti oil fires, there has been no such directive concerning exposure to depleted uranium.

What should be done? Once current tensions in the Gulf have

subsided, qualified research groups, such as the 1991 Harvard Study Team, should go to Iraq to analyse soil and water for evidence of uranium contamination. Epidemiologists should explore the connection between the uranium shells and cancer.

The United Nations must take a more active role in investigating the danger posed by the shells and begin cleanup efforts of all radioactive shells remaining in Iraq and Kuwait.

It should also consider recommending that depleted uranium penetrators be banned in accordance with international treaties on chemical and radioactive weapons.

The writer, a doctor and public health specialist, was medical coordinator of the Harvard Study Team's surveys of health in post-war Iraq. The article is reprinted from the New York Times.

LETTERS

Give us our rightful place

To the Editor:

Thank you Najwa Kafaya for writing about some of the problems of women in Arab societies in "Obsolete legacies and reflections of tomorrow" (Jordan Times, Jan. 25, 1993).

You mentioned that specialists try to help women who are confronted with various kinds of problems. I would greatly appreciate it if you supplied the readers of the Jordan Times with names, addresses, telephone numbers and people working for organisations which help women.

Many women face traumatic problems either at home or outside and have no one and nowhere to turn to, for they are denied access to someone who can lend a shoulder to cry on or who may supply constructive advice to enable them to cope with the constant pressures they might face.

There should even be a "Hotline" catered by professionals who can give aid and comfort to women in distress. Charity, like democracy, begins at home. Charity is not just giving alms to the poor, but is love for one's fellow man or woman. In order for Jordan to really appreciate and comprehend the process of democratisation, each family should establish a platform of plurality where in each member, regardless of the gender, will have a representative voice in the affairs of the household. Such a practice would not have to take away patriarchal authority but merely give each member of the family a means to express his or her opinion effectively.

Democracy in practice is actually respect for the rights of each individual and the individual is the basis and foundation of any nation; so the same norms should apply in the government of the home.

How important are women? They are as important as society itself and their importance can be measured in many ways. A major one is that they raise future generations of adults. In order for a woman to be qualified for this most important job on earth, she should be well educated so that not only her children benefit from her knowledge but also society as a whole.

A woman is not lesser when it comes to the mental capacity to think in a straight line, formulate opinions and have her own unique ideas. She might have inherent physical qualities distinguishing her from a man, but she should not be regarded as an inferior being or a thing to be manipulated by the whims of some who practice obsolete traditions which in certain cases are even un-Islamic.

It is the right of each woman to secure her place in the society as a contributing intelligent member who serves her nation, home and family within the constraints of her religion.

Islam actually allows women to become and achieve so much; it is only ignorance and backwardness that deny her her rightful place in society and life.

Name withheld upon request.

A cry for help

To the Editor:

Following is an open letter to the Lower House of Parliament sent by the writer.

Acting upon His Majesty King Hussein's slogan "the human being is the most precious asset in Jordan", and in line with the ongoing tendency, worldwide, towards providing protection to people against environmental pollution, we, the residents of the city of Fuhais, hope to bring our case to your attention.

This letter reflects deep feelings of concern and frustration over our failed attempts to remove an omnipresent danger to our lives, hoping to find an appropriate solution.

The city of Fuhais continues to struggle against the problem of pollution resulting from the tonnes of cement dust showering the city day and night and endangering the lives of its residents. This poisonous substance permeates the lungs and the liver of our children, covers their bodies, their food and drink, spoils their gardens and their beds, contaminates their water and air and causes a slow death to everyone.

Scientists have found out that cement dust, among other pollutants, causes serious health problems as it contains carbon dioxide, sulphur and lead to mention only a few substances. Lead, for instance, causes damage to the blood cells, inflammation of the nose, allergy to various parts of the body, chronic headaches and cancer.

As we follow your debates demanding from the government to open roads, improve hospitals, build industries, demands that seem impossible to meet and can be described as electioneering speeches, we have discovered that none of you has raised the question of providing protection to human beings against health hazards. You should realise that prevention is better than cure.

None of you has ever raised his voice to rescue a whole city from the danger of death and it seems that the fate of this city is of concern to no one in Parliament.

We have exhausted all our efforts and cried until our throats became hoarse, but no one ever listened to our complaints. Some of the complaints reached concerned officials, but they all went in vain, failing on deaf ears. We hope that you, as representatives of the people of Jordan, will raise your voice and serve us justice.

Issa Khalil Abu Dayeh, Fuhais.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name, and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Cabinet reshuffle put off for now

(Continued from page 1)

Some officials privately concede that there have been several mistakes and setbacks, but they are quick to add that the government was aware of its mistakes and has worked hard to fix them.

"The government has had the courage to reconsider its decision not to license three political parties and worked for an out of court settlement," the official said. "This proves that the government is conscious of the need to protect democracy even at the expense of reversing its decisions when necessary."

On a more mundane level, political analysts and officials agree that the government has been unable to transmit to all its institutions its vision for administrative reform. "The administrative apparatus is just not reacting to the vision set out by the King and the government," an official said.

"The government, however, has extended all the support it can to its plan for administrative reform and it is trying to push it down to all government levels," the official added.

As for partisan criticism that the government has been crippled by its efforts to appease all political sides in Jordan and in the process satisfied none at all, senior officials say that although this might appear to be a point of weakness on the surface "it is actually a source of strength."

"We must consider first that this is a coalition government," a well-placed governmental source said. "And although politicised ministers such as those we have, are under pressure from their constituencies to go one way or another, their presence in the government is in itself an indication of political pluralism and consensus."

The "appeasement" factor might account for what critics call the "leadership vacuum" in promulgating and defending the government's programmes and its image in public eyes.

"The people in general do not feel the presence of a government strongly committed to a clear line of policy or the emergence of an effective voice defending its policies and programmes," one critic said. Government supporters, however, argue that the problem, if and where it exists, is not due to lack of vision or clear policies on the part of the government.

"It may well be a question of approach," a Cabinet minister said. "The prime minister, besides being a quiet operator and a man who shuns publicity for publicity's sake, is a member of the royal family and a close confidant of the King," the minister added.

"He does not want to be controversial and to appear to favour some peoples' opinions over others. Sharif Zeid prefers to stay outside controversy rather than be at the centre of it."

That type of approach, a government supporter said, "does not negate the fact that Sharif Zeid wants to move ahead with democracy and institutionalise it as a way of life at this very difficult stage in Jordan's and the region's history."

Another government source, who agrees that Sharif Zeid can well be described as a "cautious" prime minister, said that the premier's policy of keeping a low profile "must be seen against his background of being the prime minister whose first government organised Jordan's return to democracy in 1989."

"Sharif Zeid's second government, or a variation on it (after the reshuffle) is the most likely candidate to supervise the next round of elections," the source said. "And based on this, what might be called 'appeasement' by him of the various political groups and tendencies in the country could be no more than his way of building a consensus upon which everybody could stand and operate."

Sanctions bite hard middle class Iraqis; hope for a U.S. policy change pervades

By Mariam M. Shabin
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

The writer has just returned from a week-long trip to Iraq.

BAGHDAD — Victorian silver tea sets and mink coats are on sale in the crowded antiques shop across from the Sheraton Hotel in Baghdad. Packed with silver from Asfahan (in Iran) and colourful Kurdish rugs, the shop does not ordinarily sell English silver and fur coats, but hard times have changed that.

"Ladies from good families come to me and ask if they can put their things on sale in my shop," said Fati Shaker, the owner of the shop. Elegantly dressed herself, she speaks at length about the impoverishment of the former upper and middle classes.

"Many of the women who come to sell the Georgian and Victorian tea sets had received them as wedding presents," says Mrs. Shaker.

Selling wedding presents is "not a good sign" she says. Economic hardships created by two wars in ten years and 29 months of U.N. sponsored economic sanctions are at the root of the situation, says the long-time shop owner.

Sanctions, says Monica Press of relief agency Oxfam, "are biting

those that are the most vulnerable and the educated middle class."

Many Iraqis agree. "Do you think that the government is being hurt or hurting?" asked Dr. Farouk Azzawi, head of the Yarmouk Hospital, one of the largest health centres in Baghdad.

"It's the little man and the English professor that are being hurt by the sanctions, not the government," he insists.

The immense effort going into the reconstruction and, in some cases, the new construction of bridges, government institutions, food warehouses and statues has given people a psychological lift. "We are rebuilding in spite of sanctions," said Yasser Tillawi, a food merchant. "We will build a greater Baghdad than the one before the sanctions and the war," he said proudly.

But reconstruction and a new drive for self-sufficiency in foodstuffs is taxing the people in the short term.

While the government is providing for 60 per cent of the basic food needs through the ration system, which was introduced shortly after the sanctions were imposed in August 1990, most Iraqis live on that alone.

A large percentage of Iraqis is thus bound to be underfed for some time to come if economic

sanctions are not lifted.

With the banning of imported luxury items in December of last year, over 100 items, are no longer available on the public market.

While black market goods exist in relatively small quantities, they are only available to certain people and at 700 times the price they were sold before the ban.

A 3,000 per cent inflation rate continues to further impoverish the people. The government hopes that by increasing agricultural production, the economic burden on the average citizen will be somehow alleviated. But the newly-inaugurated Saddam River, as well as the factories being rebuilt, will take at least another year to reap fruit.

In the meantime, Iraqis are willing to sell oil and make concessions of all sorts to improve their economic conditions.

"We want to sell oil, of course, but at slightly better terms than those presently being dictated to us," said Minister of Trade Mohammad Mehdi Saleh during a briefing with the Jordan Times.

"But to receive one third of the \$1.0 billion being proposed for our oil sale is just unreasonable," said Mr. Saleh, referring to U.N. resolutions 706 and 712 which dictate the terms of the Iraqi oil sales.

The terms of the resolutions

also clearly state that the money from the oil sale would have to be used for the purchase of food and medicine.

Mr. Saleh confirmed that Iraq had sold 10 tonnes of its gold reserves to buy wheat from Australia, shortly before the \$4 billion of Iraqi frozen assets were effectively refrozen in mid-1992.

"When a country starts selling its gold reserves, that is an indication that its money supply is not excessive," said one aid official.

Little is known about how many assets Iraq really has, except for the \$4 billion in banks across the world, one billion of which are in the United States.

Ministry of Trade officials say that at present the Iraqi government is buying some of the basic food staples that are put into the ration system from private Iraqi merchants in Iraqi dinars to avoid reducing their already depleted foreign assets.

Iraqi merchants seem to be able to get hold of foreign currency to buy food supplies through third parties.

The enormous reconstruction

effort, like the food supply system, has been made possible by an incredible resolve on the part of the government to rebuild, in part out of pride and in part to show that "Iraq loves no war."

"Only someone like Saddam Hussein can fuel such an enormous effort," said one Iraqi intellectual. "He and the Baath Party are so resolute in their ambitions that any other considerations become irrelevant," he added.

While many observers have been speculating for much of the last two years that the reconstruction effort in Iraq was only possible through sanction busting, such critics appear to have underestimated the ingenuity of the Iraqis.

Most of the food warehouses, 50 per cent of which were bombed by the coalition forces in 1991, are being rebuilt from leftover construction material and melted down metal sheets. A visit to one of the warehouses in the Dila Governorate clearly showed that the roof was a patchwork of metal sheets taken from the old warehouse.

In the meekness district of Baghdad, dozens of welders are taking apart every metal barrel and every piece of scrap from bombed out buildings that can be rewelded and used again. Iraqi-made cement provides for the rest of the needed material.

Ingenuity provides for much of Iraq's well-being these days, where even leftover parts will have an end to them.

"During this last raid on Baghdad by the Americans we were so afraid that they would hit the water supplies or our electricity centres again," said one resident of the middle class Al Mansour district.

Many of the telephone and electricity lines in Baghdad and Basra have been rebuilt by what the government still had in stock supplies and partly by reused lines from villages and smaller towns.

While Iraqi officials and people are hoping that economic sanctions will be lifted in the first year of President Clinton's term, they are preparing themselves for a long wait.

Arafat heads for Baghdad after talks

(Continued from page 1)

with the U.S. and the U.N. all he has to do is change his behaviour."

While the exact contents of the message carried by Mr. Arafat to the Iraqi president were not known, PLO officials said that the message was from "more than one Arab leader."

Recently Iraq made veiled overtures to Gulf countries, in particular Saudi Arabia, and warned of the regional threat that could be posed by a rearméd Islamic republic in Iran.

The PLO, who backed Iraq in the war and thus became an organisation "non-grata" in the Gulf countries, has recently improved its ties with the Saudi Arabian government.

A personal envoy of Mr. Arafat, PLO Executive Committee member Mahmoud Abbas, apologised for the stand taken by the PLO in the 1990/1991 crisis and war during a visit to the Saudi kingdom in January.

In recent weeks PLO delegations and envoys have also visited Qatar and Oman, two Gulf countries seen likely to seek a reconciliation with Iraq in the not too distant future.

As the first head of state to visit Iraq in the two years since the

Gulf war ended, Mr. Arafat's visit is seen as welcome, say officials at the Iraqi embassy in Amman.

"He is going to talk about a whole host of issues, including the issue of the expellees in South Lebanon, the peace process and of course the return of Iraq into the international and Arab fold," said the senior PLO official who chose to remain anonymous.

King Hussein has been in the forefront in calling for an end to the two-and-a-half-year-old economic sanctions against Iraq. Addressing military officers in November, the King called for greater liberalisation of the Iraqi political system.

"What we wish for is a national reconciliation and democracy which would enable it (Iraq) to overcome all obstacles. We also wish for political pluralism which would achieve stability..." the King said.

Mr. Arafat travelled by helicopter to the Jordanian-Iraqi border and hoped to find an Iraqi helicopter on the Iraqi side, said Ambassador Abdul Rahim.

"Despite the sanctions they should be able to send a helicopter," said the ambassador referring to the ban on Iraqi flights. "Otherwise he will travel 600 kilometres by car to Baghdad."

Hamdoun detects 'signals' of change

(Continued from page 1)

everything they needed to achieve their mission.

A top U.N. nuclear inspector, Maurizio Zifferero, left after a six-day mission Sunday saying that he was not confident Baghdad was prepared to name the foreign suppliers.

He said without that list, officials could not certify that Baghdad was complying with U.N. resolutions on dismantling its weapons of mass destruction.

Mr. Zifferero said in Bahrain, Iraq could develop an atomic bomb within 10 years if it were

able to renew its nuclear weapons programme.

Mr. Zifferero, deputy chief of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), said Western intelligence experts had concluded that if economic sanctions were lifted, and if the United Nations were not thoroughly monitoring Iraq, the Iraqis "in five to seven years... could be in the same level that they were" before the Gulf war.

"These are big ifs," Mr. Zifferero said. He said that before the war the Iraqis were "two or three years away from the bomb."

Christopher optimistic on crisis

(Continued from page 1)

the EC nations and six neighbouring nations.

Current relations are now governed by a 1975 accord that provides for low-interest EC loans, free trade in industrial goods but limits on imports of Israeli farm products.

British Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd said earlier the Middle East peace process and therefore Israel's security would be at risk if Israel did not settle the crisis.

Speaking to reporters as he arrived for a regular meeting of EC foreign ministers, Mr. Hurd said he and his colleagues would stress the need to find a solution

when they meet Mr. Peres at a dinner Monday night.

"We will all, I expect, point out quite clearly our dismay at this turn of events," Mr. Hurd said referring to the crisis.

"The Israelis have to find a way out of this difficulty. Otherwise the peace process will be at risk, and on the peace process depends the security of Israel and the hopes for a real and lasting settlement of that long-running and disastrous dispute."

Mr. Hurd declined to answer when asked whether the community should threaten Israel with economic sanctions, as demanded by Palestinian leaders, if the expulsion orders are not reversed.



Strong will and determination are the driving forces behind Iraq's reconstruction boom in the aftermath of the allied bombing (Photo by Mariam M. Shabin)

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Japanese traditional sports mission arrives in Amman

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The 32-member delegation of the Japanese traditional sports mission arrived in Amman Monday on an invitation from the Jordanian High Council of Martial Arts (JHCMA).

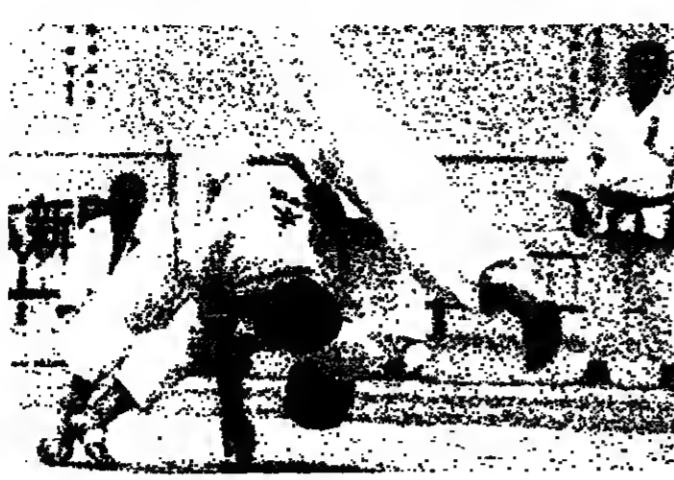
The delegation, currently on a tour of the Middle East, will have a four day stay in the Kingdom during which they will have two shows in Amman and intend to demonstrate the four Japanese traditional sports — judo, kendo, aikido, and karate.

In addition to the now familiar judo and karate, Jordanian spectators and martial arts athletes will have the unique chance of watching the less known aikido and kendo.

Kendo is the Japanese sport of fencing with bamboo swords. Aikido on the other hand, is known as the Japanese art of self-defence employing locks and holds and utilizing the principle of non-resistance to cause an opponent's own momentum to work against him.

The JHCMA, chaired by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, has arranged a busy schedule for the visiting delegation including practice sessions with the Jordanian karate and judo teams and lectures in martial arts.

The Japanese traditional sports mission headed by Mr. Kunio Katakura, is affiliated with the Japan Foundation, a non-profit organisation established in 1972 with the aim of



While Jordanians are familiar with judo...



...kendo will be a novel sport to watch

enhancing understanding and cultural relations between Japan and other countries.

The first show of the visiting delegation will be held Wednesday afternoon at Al Orthodox Club, while the second will be held Thursday at Al Yarmouk University in Irbid.

Courier, Seles still leaders of the pack

MELBOURNE (R) — Jim Courier and Monica Seles stamped their authority on the Australian Open at the weekend and gave notice they intend to dominate tennis in 1993.

The pair's title successes in the first Grand Slam tournament of the year merely proved that little has changed since they both stood on the victory rostrum at Flinders Park 12 months ago.

Courier's success in 1992 propelled him to the forefront of the men's game where he stayed for virtually the whole year despite failing to win a tournament beyond the French Open in May.

His rivals may have to wait months for another chance to unseat the super-fit 22-year-old American.

The next Grand Slam tournament is the French Open starting in May on the red clay of Roland Garros, a venue where Courier has triumphed in each of the last two years.

Ederberg, the world number two who has now lost three Australian Open finals, two of them to Courier, agrees the future looks bright for the American.

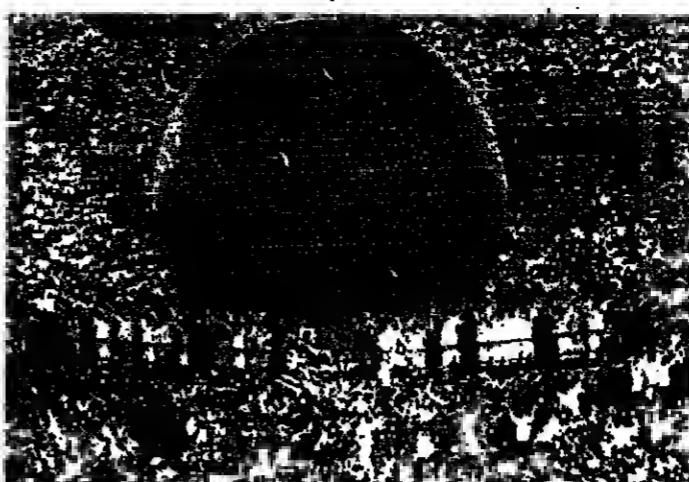
"I think he's already a champion. He's won four Slams now, he's a really hard worker...I think he is going to get more and more credit," Ederberg said.

Ederberg and Pete Sampras were unable to stop Courier delivering at Melbourne, and even a fit Andre Agassi or Goran Ivanisevic would have struggled to match him in a tournament which retains its reputation as the most arduous of the year.

Whenever it was played, it is a fair bet Seles would win the women's singles. Her domination of her rivals is such that she has now reached the final in 33 of her last 34 tournaments, winning 23 of them. Her Grand Slam tally is now eight and, at just 19, she remains on a heady upward spiral.

After her 4-6 6-3 6-2 defeat of Steffi Graf Saturday in a final which again demonstrated her competitive instincts she sounded almost in awe of her achievements.

"It's incredible and I still don't know a lot of the time how I've done it. I just take one match at a time and maybe don't look too far ahead," she said.



An elaborate halftime programme, which included U.S. entertainer Michael Jackson, accompanied by 3,000 children, fills the Rose Bowl Stadium (AFP photo)

Cowboys demolish Bills

PASADENA, California (AP) — It was quicker than anyone could imagine.

Three seasons ago, the Dallas Cowboys were the worst team in NFL history. Now they're Super Bowl champions and they did it with four of the quickest touchdowns ever.

That left the Buffalo Bills as the first team to lose three straight Super Bowls and the National Football Conference's supremacy intact — nine straight National Football League titles, seven in overwhelming fashion, this time 52-17.

With most valuable player Troy Aikman throwing for four touchdowns and Charles Haley and Ken Norton leading a defence that forced a record nine turnovers, the Cowboys scored two touchdowns 15 seconds apart in the first period Sunday and two more 18 seconds apart in the second.

"Our defence is somebody now," Norton said of a unit that is sending no players to the all-star pro Bowl game, to six for Dallas' offense.

Along with Aikman, the defence was the factor that made American Football Conference champs Buffalo the first team to

lose three straight NFL championship games after becoming just the second team to make it three straight times.

There was something strange about this year's Super Bowl telecast: the advertising.

Soft drink commercials started like low-budget cooking and home decorating shows. A basketball star shot hoops in outer space in commercials for a shoe company and from atop a skyscraper for a fast-food chain.

And the latest game in a series of commercials with animated beer bottles playing football hinged on intervention by a blimp driver.

But maybe that's what it takes to hold an audience when Dallas is running up the score in a 52-17 victory over Buffalo for the National Football League championship.

No matter what the score, Super Bowl games usually draw the biggest audience of the year to television, enabling the network that telecasts the event to charge record commercial rates.

NBC wouldn't say how much it charged for this year's telecast, but industry sources put it at about \$850,000 for a half-minute ad.

Statistics from Sunday's Super Bowl

	Buffalo	Dallas
First downs	22	20
Rushes-yards	29-108	29-137
Passing yards	254	271
Passes	22-38-4	22-30-0
Sacks by-yards	1-2	4-22
Sacks by-yards	3-45.3	4-32.8
Punts	8-5	4-2
Fumbles-lost	4-30	8-53
Penalties-yards	28-48	31-12

Five more cities join 2000 summer Olympics race

LAUSANNE (R) — Five more cities, including scandal-hit Milan, Monday joined the race to host the 2000 Summer Olympics.

On the final day for bids, Istanbul and Milan made early presentations to the International Olympic Committee (IOC).

Sydney, Manchester and Brasilia were due to present their cases later in the day. Beijing and Berlin have already submitted their bids.

Beijing and Sydney are generally seen as the frontrunners ahead of

Manchester, Istanbul, Berlin, Milan and Brasilia.

Milan went in early Monday but the city faced a massive public relations task.

Milan has become the vortex of a major political corruption scandal that has led to many of the city's politicians being arrested for allegedly accepting bribes from businessmen.

Those who voted against the proposal said Milan was not fit morally to host the games and in a recent opinion poll 56 per cent voted against the city's candidature.

For Istanbul, Monday's bid represents an attempt to create Olympic history.

Located in both Europe and Asia, the Turkish city straddling the Bosphorus would, if selected, become the first city to host the Olympics on two continents.

The choice of the host city will be made at an IOC session in Moete Carlo in September.

London betting: 4-5 Beijing, 6-4 Sydney, 8-1 Manchester, Istanbul, 14-1 Milan, Berlin, 100-1 Brasilia.

AC Milan apparently slowing down

MILAN (AP) — Following a blistering first half in the current campaign, League leader AC Milan is apparently slowing down its record pace.

But its pursuers are slowing too, frustrating their hopes and chances to get closer to the dominant Milan powerhouse.

As AC Milan came to the brink of its first defeat in 20 months at Foggia — and barely a-voided it — runnerup Internazionale was held to a 2-2 draw at home by underdog Udinese and remained 8 points behind the cross-town rival overall.

Third-place Atalanta of Bergamo played to a goalless draw at Parma.

"We played well only a half of the game. We missed a great opportunity to take advantage of Milan's draw and reduce our gap," said Inter's coach Osvaldo Bagdoli.

At Foggia Milan faced risks and a big scare but still played to a 2-2 draw which extended its unbeaten streak to 53 league games.

However the draw, the fourth in 18 rounds this season, prevented Milan from setting a record of nine consecutive wins on the road and more than that evidence an unexpected defensive weakness.

As veteran sweeper Franco Baresi served a one-game suspension, Milan's defenders were often in trouble against the fast actions of Foggia's forwards who scored a first half goal and earned a penalty kick which Milan's goalie Sebastiano Rossi managed to stop.

"If Foggia made it 2-1, it would have meant certain defeat for us," Milan's coach Fabio Capello said.

Instead Jean Pierre Papin and Frank Rijkaard lifted Milan to a 2-1 lead after escaping the danger and Foggia needed a helpful hand



Lazio's Paul Gascoigne

from Goalie Rossi to capture a well deserved draw.

Rossi failed to grab the ball on a corner kick, Milan defenders were slow in reacting and Foggia's midfielder Andrea Seno was quick to kick in from a few metres.

"If a team deserved victory, it was Foggia," Seno said after the game.

The southern Italian team, which wears the same black-and-red colours of AC Milan, also used Milan's traditional midfield pressing, zone defence and fast offense in the attempt to cause the day's sensation.

Most critics agreed that Foggia went very close to it.

"Milan faced the devils at Foggia," wrote Italy's largest sports daily Gazzetta Dello Sport.

The devil is AC Milan symbol. Farther behind Milan, Lazio of Rome joined Juventus and Atalanta in third place, still 11 points behind the leaders.

Lazio downed Sampdoria at Rome's Olympic Stadium with goals of German forward Karheinz Riedle and Giovanni Stroppa.

Lazio's English Virtuoso Paul

Gascoigne earned headlines for his outstanding performance against La Samp.

Last week Gascoigne was bitterly criticised by Italian media for answering with a belch a question by a television interviewer.

However Lazio supporters apparently enjoyed it and chanted "Ohh he's a jolly good belcher" during last Thursday's cup of Italy match against Torino.

In the round AC Milan takes on last-place Pescara, which unexpectedly held AS Roma to a 1-1 draw.

Inter travels to Cagliari, Sardinia and Lazio plays at Florence.

Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



GOREN BRIDGE

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RIKI MARKUS, 1910-1992

North-South vulnerable. South deals.

NORTH
♦ 10 3
♥ J 9 7 6 5
♦ 10 6
♠ 10 5 4 2

WEST
♦ 5 4 2
♥ A K 9 7
♦ A K 8 4 3 2
♠ 8 5
♦ 7 3

SOUTH
♦ Q J 8 6
♥ 10
♦ A K Q 9 7 4 3
♠ K

The bidding:
South West North East
1 ♠ Pass Pass Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠.
It was with great ease that we learned of the death of one of the greatest women bridge players of any era. Riki Markus of London. Her death follows by less than two months that of Fritz Gordon, the partner with whom she achieved her greatest successes. Together they won two World Women's Pairs, the World Mixed Teams and World Women's Olympiad Teams, and numerous European Women's Championships. Markus became the first woman to achieve the rank of World

Grandmaster, followed soon after by Gordon.

At the table, Markus was an aggressive bidder and enterprising player with excellent table presence. There are many great hands featuring her skill, yet this simple one was among her favorites.

North-South were using a system in which a one-diamond opening bid promised a hand of 16 points or better, hence South's choice of one spade for the initial action. Sitting East with the vulnerability in her favor, Markus elected to defend rather than bid, a decision not easy to contemplate, but which was soon vindicated.

West led the king of hearts and continued with the ace. East discarded a diamond and declarer, reluctant to ruff, did the same. West shifted to the three of clubs. East ruff with the ace and returned a low club. Declarer ruffed, cashed the ace of diamonds and continued with the king. East ruffed, cashed the two high spades and then forced declarer's last trump with a club. That was South's last trick—400 and an absolute top to East-West.
Riki worked long and hard to promote bridge. The game will miss her sorely.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR TUESDAY FEBRUARY 2, 1993

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Getting your message or idea to someone in a position of authority can be easy today — just be prepared to wait your turn. Pay-off comes in p.m. for those who've been persistent.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You like the better things of life which are costly and today you will be able to find ways to increase your income to have more of them.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) You are resourceful and ingenious during the daytime, in being able to bring unto yourself your personal desires but tonight avoid being thwarted in gaining your aims.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) You get a well-rounded awareness of just what you can do to make your goals more realistic so get busy and plan future assault to do so.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) A friend of character has the ability and the purpose to aid you to gain a desire which has long been difficult to obtain; tonight don't put out effort on goals.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Push whatever your worldly aims and ambitions are during the daytime and make progress towards more outside success, tonight avoid the limelight.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Many new ideas filter through your consciousness that can be very helpful to you so jot them down and make notations of them for your future use.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Think about what you can do to convince a difficult associate that you should have support you need in some important project, tonight keep cheerful.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) A fine day to carry through with stickiness at whatever you have already begun and get good results, tonight take care of your health.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Consider well the amusements you enjoy the most and arrange to enjoy them with congenial comrades during the daytime but tonight avoid expensive pleasures.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Look straight at any problems or issues facing you at home today and you will be able to uncover a practical solution for them; tonight enjoy TV, music, etc.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A perfect day for you to acquire the information that you have been searching for since it will fit into your activities, tonight avoid errors in statements.

THE BETTER HALF.

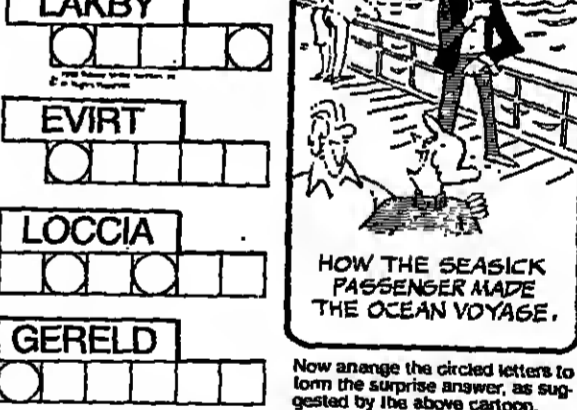
By Harris



"I got this tattoo so I don't have to keep apologizing for my body!"

JUMBLE. THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

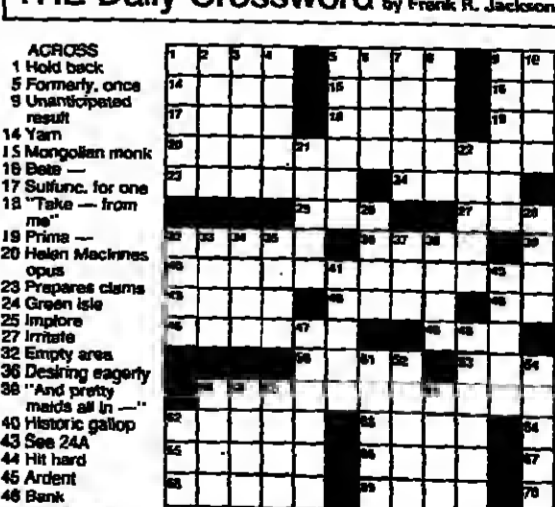
Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here:

Yesterday's Jumbles: FAINT PRINT TETHER UNLESS
Answer: What the ballet dancer worked — A SPLIT SHIRT

THE Daily Crossword by Frank R. Jackson



Across:
1 Hold back.
5 Formerly, once.
8 Unabridged result.
14 Yarn.
15 Mergolien monk.
16 Bait.
17 Sulfuric, for one.
18 Take — from me.
19 Prime.
20 Helen MacInnes' topic.
23 Prepares claims.
24 Green Isle.
25 Improve.
27 Irritate.
32 Empty area.
33 Desiring eagerly.
38 "And pretty much all in..."
40 Historic galleon.
43 See 24A.
44 Hit hard.
45 Ardent.
46 Bank.
48 Documents.
49 Matched collection.

Down:
10 I overy soldier.
11 Transgressions.
12 White-tailed bird around?
13 "For Two".
21 Jewelry resin.
22 Door feature.
23 Scotland's home.
28 In good condition.
30 Mineral vein.
31 Pitcher.
32 Raced.
33 Poker hand.
34 Invisible emanation.
35 Musical sign.
37 Coagulated matter.
38 White scraps.
41 Bunch of TV.
42 Kind of sleeve.
43 Craving.
48 Mistle happy.
51 Old Greek marketplace.
52 Truman's birthplace.
54 Get lost.
58 — were the days.
59 Crispin dye.

57 Deep fear.
58 Burial place.
59 Braintight.
60 Polka — 61 Lame.
62 Chit.

Financial Markets

in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	New York Close Date 1/29/93	New York Close Date 1/29/93
Sterling Pound	1.4870	1.4543
Deutsche Mark	1.6113	1.6277
Swiss Franc	1.4880	1.5035
French Franc	5.4515	5.5090 **
Japanese Yen	124.65	124.95
European Currency Unit	1.2115	1.1984 **

100 Per STD
* European Opening in 8:00 a.m. GMT
** European Closing in 4:00 p.m. GMT

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.15	3.25	3.37	3.68
Sterling Pound	6.06	5.75	5.50	5.50
Deutsche Mark	8.56	8.37	8.00	7.50
Swiss Franc	5.31	5.31	5.25	5.12
French Franc	13.00	12.50	11.00	9.50
Japanese Yen	3.43	3.37	3.31	3.31
European Currency Unit	9.75	9.75	9.56	9.00

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.15	3.25	3.37	3.68
Sterling Pound	6.06	5.75	5.50	5.50
Deutsche Mark	8.56	8.37	8.00	7.50
Swiss Franc	5.31	5.31	5.25	5.12
French Franc	13.00	12.50	11.00	9.50
Japanese Yen	3.43	3.37	3.31	3.31
European Currency Unit	9.75	9.75	9.56	9.00

Interbank bid rates for minimum trading U.S. Dollar, 1,000,000 or equivalent.
Precious Metals Date: 1/29/93

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	329.55	6.50	Silver	3.66	.080

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin Date: 1/29/93

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.690	0.692
Sterling Pound	1.0031	1.0081
Deutsche Mark	0.4234	0.4255
Swiss Franc	0.4582	0.4605
French Franc	0.1250	0.1256
Japanese Yen	0.5515	0.5543
Dutch Guilder	0.3759	0.3778
Swedish Krona	0.0932	0.0937
Italian Lira	0.0455	0.0457
Belgian Franc	0.02075	0.02085

For 100 Other Currencies Date: 1/29/93

Currency	Bid	Offer
Rahat Dinar	1.7960	1.8150
Lebanese Lira	0.0360	0.0405
Saudi Riyal	0.1832	0.1848
Kuwait Dinar	2.2350	2.2920
Qatari Riyal	0.1864	0.1878
Egyptian Pound	0.1950	0.2150
Omani Riyal	1.7550	1.7700
UAE Dirham	0.1864	0.1878
Greek Drachma	0.3200	0.3300
Cypriot Pound	1.4050	1.4325

For 100 Currencies for Amman Financial Market Date: 1/29/93

Index	30/1/93 Close	31/1/93 Close
All-Share	190.46	190.42
Banking Sector	139.06	138.86
Insurance Sector	211.19	210.20
Industry Sector	259.63	259.92
Services Sector	256.60	256.43

December 31, 1992 = 100

World Bank to lend Lebanon \$175m

BEIRUT (R) — The World Bank is to lend Lebanon \$175 million for rebuilding the country's infrastructure, devastated by 15 years of civil war, officials said Monday.

They said an initial agreement was signed in Washington last week and the loan would be granted after parliamentary approval.

The loan agreement, the first between Lebanon and the World Bank in 14 years, was reached after months of negotiations. Lebanon would pay back the loan over a period of 17 years, with a five-year exemption, and at an interest rate of 7.5 per cent. Lebanon managed to limit foreign debts to about \$800 million despite the 1975-90 civil war. Its internal debt is estimated at more than \$2.4 billion.

Officials said the loan reflected

growing international confidence in the government of billionaire Prime Minister Rafik Al Hariri, counting on foreign aid and loans for reconstruction.

Economists and bankers said that although the loan was significant, it was only a small step in the right direction. According to the agreement, Lebanon would use \$35 million to rebuild its power grid, \$60 million on water and sewage systems, \$25 million on housing, \$30 million on garbage incineration, \$15 million on vocational schools, and \$10 million on technical aid.

The loan was announced as the Hariri government came under mounting criticism for failing to halt economic rot.

A three-month political honeymoon ended last month after Mr. Hariri argued with President

Elias Hrawi over the appointment of senior civil servants.

That put the Lebanese pound under pressure and forced the central bank to step in to stabilise it at 1,825 to the dollar.

Before Mr. Hariri was appointed, the pound was selling at around 2,400 to the dollar. It surged to about 1,825 after he was named on popular hopes that the entrepreneur, in his first political post, would save the country.

But many Lebanese, disappointed by political rifts and the lack of a swift economic revival, recently began switching bank deposits from pounds to dollars, putting the U.S. currency in demand. Bankers said the central bank sold more than \$200 million last month to support the pound.

"There is a crisis of confidence," said Fadi Mubarrak, a foreign exchange dealer. "The government has achieved nothing on the economic level and on the political level it is running into trouble. This prompts depositors to return to the safer dollar."

Constant demand for the dollar to purchase imports are another factor weakening the national currency, bankers said.

"Lebanon is an importer, we don't export much," Mr. Mubarrak said. "This creates a constant demand for foreign currencies while we have no hard currency income, from oil or tourism."

Most bankers said they were not encouraged by the loan. "It is a loan," one said. "It will increase our deficit and push inflation up. It is not a cure. We need aid, not loans."

Russia hikes domestic gas prices

MOSCOW (R) — Russia more than doubled gas prices for industrial and household users Monday, raising the cost of living another notch for millions struggling to make ends meet.

A government resolution, quoted by ITAR-TASS news agency, lifted the wholesale price of natural gas to 3,600 roubles (\$6.30) per 1,000 cubic metres from the present level of between 1,100 and 1,600 roubles (\$1.90 and \$2.80).

The price of gas for household use was set at 600 roubles (\$1) per 1,000 cubic metres, up from 216 (40 U.S. cents).

Gas producers say the higher

prices — still only a tiny fraction of the average export price of \$80 per 1,000 cubic metres — are essential for them to cover increased costs of maintaining production and investing in development.

Value added tax, currently 20 per cent, will be levied on top of the new gas prices.

Russian inflation last year was about 2,200 per cent following liberalisation of prices of many goods, including equipment and raw materials.

The resolution said the new prices were necessary, not only to cover rising gas industry ex-

penses, but to reduce energy waste.

The state gas industry monopoly, Gazprom, and the State Price Committee were instructed to examine the gas industry's performance over five months of this year and consider the need for linking gas prices to inflation and input costs.

Russian homes are often overheated in winter. People open windows because there is no way of adjusting radiators controlled by communal authorities.

TASS said supplies to other members of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) would be determined by inter-

governmental agreements "beneficial to both sides" but should be no less than 13,000 roubles (\$23) per 1,000 cubic metres.

It did not say how much CIS customers were charged previously.

"In the absence of an agreement, deliveries will be made at average world prices calculated using the average quarterly rate for the rouble against the dollar," TASS said.

All non-CIS countries, including the three former Soviet Baltic republics of Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia, are to be charged hard currency at world market prices.

Turkey to set up new privatisation agency

ANKARA (R) — The Turkish government, determined to speed up divestment of loss-making public enterprises, is splitting its privatisation agency into two, officials said.

A new body will take on the task of privatisation from the existing Public Partnership Administration (KOTI), which will concentrate on its other main role of financing major projects.

KOTI official said some key state firms, such as textile giant

Sumerbank, would be allowed to design and implement their own privatisation in coordination with the new agency.

Prime Minister Suleyman Demirel, who announced the reorganisation plan Sunday, said the government sought to accelerate the privatisation programme this year to raise 25 trillion lira (\$2.8 billion), a target many economists regard as ambitious.

He did not say when the proposed new privatisation adminis-

tration would start operating.

The government plans legal changes to cut out some existing bureaucratic obstacles and speed up sales, the official said.

Once the new agency is up and running, KOTI will deal only with project finance and administration of a compulsory savings fund which has collected 35 trillion lira (\$3.9 billion) from the public.

Officials say the government is looking more favourably on a plan prepared by privatisation experts to use sale proceeds to repay debts now weighing down the state-run enterprises.

"The proceeds should be used for relieving their debt burdens so that we can market them easily," KOTI Chairman Usun Sanver told Reuters last month.

Turkey's privatisation earnings stood at 4.3 trillion lira last year, below the target of 5.5 trillion lira.

But 1992 earnings were a big advance on the total of 3.6 trillion

lira raised through privatisation from 1986, when former prime minister Turgut Ozal established KOTI to 1991.

The Turkish currency fell to 8,556 lira against the dollar at end-1992 from 680 lira in 1986.

Businessmen and economists have been urging the government to act more quickly to get rid of state enterprises which help to swell Turkey's huge public deficit, expected to exceed 130 trillion lira (\$14.4 billion) this year.

The government sees the deficit as the major cause of inflation. It has pledged to cut wholesale price inflation to 47 per cent this year from 61.4 per cent at end-1992.

Privatisation in Turkey has been slowed by bureaucratic procedures, government unwillingness to countenance widespread redundancies and the sheer difficulty of finding buyers for the more unprofitable parts of the state's economic empire.

Electricity crisis costs Philippines \$25m a day

MANILA (AP) — The energy secretary was telling a television audience that the worst of the electricity crisis would be over this year. Suddenly, screens went blank; power had been cut at the station.

Filipinos have been coping with an electricity shortage since 1989 because of the failure of previous government to build enough generating plants.

Since October, the situation has reached crisis proportions, with daily power cuts of up to seven hours in Manila and other major cities.

Filipinos fear even longer blackouts will start in March when air conditioners increase demand during the hottest months of the year.

"It is difficult to say exactly how much megawatt shortage we will have this summer," Energy Secretary Delfin Lazaro said. "The basis of our projection is there will be about 575 megawatts (a day) shortage. This will mean about 4½ to 5-hour brownouts."

Traffic lights switch off during "brownouts" and the resulting gridlock worsens air pollution. Offices often send employees home because indoor temperatures become unbearable without air conditioning and fans.

Food spoils in refrigerators. Water supplies are curtailed because pumps cannot operate. Telephone service is affected because of breakdowns at relay stations.

The hum of countless private generators adds to the din of street noise. Barges are late in reporting statements and executing money transfers because blackouts shut down their computers.

Officials hope the crisis will ease by September, when new "fast track" plants will add about 803 megawatts. The government in June approved the construction of the plants, many of which are little more than a diesel generator housed in a minimal building.

But some engineers warn the problem may persist until 1996 if the economy improves and demand increases. Aging plants

must also be shut down for repairs once the new facilities are operating.

The crisis is due primarily to a 1986 decision by then-president Corason Aquino to mothball a 600-megawatt nuclear plant because of safety concerns and allegations that Westinghouse Electric Corp. bribed her predecessor, Ferdinand Marcos.

Westinghouse denies the allegation.

The Aquino administration delayed approving plans to compensate for the loss of the nuclear plant and no major new facilities were completed during her six-year term, which ended in June.

Her successor, Fidel Ramos, launched a \$2.2-billion crash programme to build plants.

Economists say it is difficult to quantify the effects of the power crisis on the Philippine economy, which has barely grown for two years.

Baring Securities, a stock brokerage, estimates the crisis costs the economy to \$29 million a day in production and wage losses.

"If electricity stops, business stops," said Conrad Elag, who works at a Manila laundry. "The on-and-off power supply also is affecting our machines, which now have to be visited more often by repairmen."

Raul Concepcion, chairman of a joint government-private energy task force, said the government will offer tax breaks and other incentives to companies which agree to operate generators fulltime, thereby freeing electricity to other consumers.

A newspaper reported recently that the Philippines' electricity crisis has been exacerbated by widespread corruption including theft, overpricing and phony delivery of spare parts to generating plants.

MEES: More oil firms quit Syria

NICOSIA (R) — A U.S. and a Spanish oil company are joining other international firms in pulling out of Syria, the Middle East Economic Survey (MEES) said Monday.

The Cyprus-based newsletter said it was reliably informed that the Spanish company Repsol was relinquishing its share in the Al Andalus concession in central Syria, following three years of exploration there.

And it said Atlantic Richfield (ARCO) of the United States was pulling out of its partnership with the U.S. firm Marathon in the Palmyra concession in central Syria because of its lack of success after drilling five wells.

It said Enron, British Petroleum and ARCO British pulled out of Syria last year, also because of poor exploration results.

Oil companies have also complained that the terms under which they share production and costs are not as favourable as in other countries.

The country was last year producing about 480,000 barrels per day of light and heavy crude.

Repsol Exploration-Syria, a unit of Repsol S.A., had told Reuters last April that initial tests of the second well it was required to drill as part of its contract were promising and raised hopes for commercial production.

But the results of those tests were in the end not revealed, and MEES said a decision to extend the three-year exploration period had obviously not been made.

Repsol held 60 per cent of the concession. Its other partners were Spain's CIA Espanola de Petroleos S.A. (CEPSA), with 25 per cent, and Petroleos de Portugal S.A. (Petrogal), with 15 per cent.

Top U.S. economist says G-7 should hold summit on growth

DAVOS, Switzerland (R) — The group of seven (G-7) rich industrial nations should hold a special summit in the spring to agree a programme to stimulate world growth, a top U.S. economist has said.

Fred Bergsten, director of the Institute for International Economics, said the world was entering its third year of virtual stagnation, but the G-7 had done nothing to restart growth due to lack of leadership.

"The most important point today is that the G-7 is dead," he told business and political leaders at the annual World Economic Forum in the Swiss mountain resort of Davos.

Mr. Bergsten, a former U.S. under-secretary for monetary affairs, said G-7 had permitted the emergence of a huge Japanese trade surplus, costing jobs and output in many other countries.

He said ideally a new Global five-point growth accord should be launched at a special G-7 summit, perhaps in Washington, in late March or April, soon after the full unveiling of the Clinton domestic economic programme.

He said such an accord should include:

- Substantial additional Japanese fiscal stimulus to make Japanese domestic demand grow again at its trend rate of 3.5 to four per cent.

- Agreement to foster a 20 per cent appreciation of the yen against other G-7 currencies.

- Significant fiscal tightening in Germany, to give the Bundesbank room to cut interest rates substantially.

- Interest rate reductions in all major countries.

- Restoration of "reference ranges" for currencies to move against each other, as in the G-7 Louvre accord of 1987.

A coordinated G-7 effort could help significantly, perhaps decisively, to break the policy gridlock in several of the key

countries," Mr. Bergsten declared.

The U.S. economist said the stalling of the six-year GATT Uruguay Round talks to liberalise world trade was "ominous."

He said the most pragmatic course might be to wrap up the negotiations promptly, within the current American legislative timetable, on the basis of the agreements already reached.

German finance ministry state secretary Horst Koehler said all countries needed to remove obstacles to growth by raising saving and investment, reducing public sector deficits and improving their markets.

U.S. economist Lester Thurow sounded a note of pessimism, saying the world economy had been slowing for decades and excess industrial capacity was pushing unemployment steadily upward.

"What we have is not the Great Depression. It's the great stagnation," he added.

Mr. Thurow, dean of the Sloan School of Management, said real wages of young American employed had fallen in the last 10 years and this largely explained why three of the last four U.S. presidents who ran for reelection lost.

He said President Bill Clinton must achieve four per cent economic growth quickly to have a chance of reelection in 1996 and would then have to take steps to stop imports flooding in.

"You would call it protectionism, I would say it's isolation, but he would say it's common sense to get reelection," he added.

Karl Otto Poehl, former president of the German Bundesbank, said it would be the worst thing that could happen to the world achieve four per cent.

Henry Kaufman, a noted U.S. economist once known as "Dr. Doom" for his gloomy predictions, described Mr. Thurow's proposal as a "highly dangerous approach."

U.N. official says 60 million Africans face starvation

LAGOS (R) — Sixty million people in east and southern Africa are facing starvation due to a food crisis caused by political conflicts and ineffective development strategies, a U.N. official has said.

Layashi Yaker, head of the U.N. Economic Commission for Africa, was quoted by the News Agency of Nigeria as saying unrest and poor economic planning had undermined the ability of some African states to feed themselves.

"No elaborately carved out development strategy, important as it is, will ensure sustainable food production unless the countries of the continent resolved their political conflicts," he said.

Mr. Yaker told a conference in Nigeria's southern city of Ibadan that "hushing aside the continent's political reality and preaching the gospel of sustainable food production was tantamount to making an omelette without breaking eggs."

He said internal political conflicts in some African nations have led to massive migration and displacement of people which compounded food production problems.

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LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Monday.

One U.S. dollar	1.2702/07	Canadian dollar	1.6240/50
	1.6250/65	Deutchmarks	1.4997/5007
	33.41/45	Dutch guilders	5.4900/50
	1505/1510	Swiss francs	33.41/45
	124.84/89	Belgian francs	1505/1510
	7.4220/4321	French francs	124.84/89
	6.9150/7.0050	Italian lire	7.4220/4321
	6.2550/2350	Japanese yen	6.9150/7.0050
	1.4575/85	Swedish crowns	6.2550/2350
One sterling	\$329.40/329.90	Norwegian crowns	1.4575/85
One ounce of gold		Danish crowns	\$329.40/329.90

Cinema Tel: 677421
CONCORD
Kevin Costner and Whitney Houston
BODYGUARD
Shows: 12:30, 3:15, 6:00, 8:30, 10:30
Free Car Parking

Cinema Tel: 634144
PHILADELPHIA
Danny Glover — In
FLIGHT OF THE INTRUDER
Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30
THE BUGS BUNNY

Tel: 675571
Nabil Al Mashini Theatre
Tuesday January 5th marks the opening of the new theatre season presenting:
Pandemonium (Ta'a wa Qatmeb)
Daily at 8:30 p.m.
Tickets office open all day

Tel: 625155
AHLAN THEATRE
Nabil & Hisham Theatre
Daily presents at 8:30 p.m. (except Saturdays and Sundays).
Extra show Thursdays at 4:30 p.m.
"Welcome New World Order Play/93"
In a new form.
Box office opens daily for booking and reservation.

French left, right prepare for cohabitation

PARIS (AP) — It is politically called "cohabitation," but the increasingly likely division of rule between a Socialist president and a conservative parliament already looks like a failing marriage.

President Francois Mitterrand's governing Socialists trail badly in the polls and appear certain to lose March 21 National Assembly elections.

The confident conservatives promise to give him a hard time the last two years of his term.

Mr. Mitterrand could do the same to them.

Unlike most other parliamentary democracies, where the president is a figurehead, France gives its president powers that can impinge on the parliament.

For example, he can fire the prime minister, whom he chooses, and is empowered to dismiss the parliament and call elections.

The threat of dissolution will hang over a cohabitation parliament, although Mr. Mitterrand is unlikely to take that step unless the Socialists' popularity rebounds.

The constitution gives the president ambiguous control of foreign and defence policy. Parliament traditionally has had no say, even though the premier picks the foreign and defence ministers.

Conservative parties plan to challenge this.

During the last cohabitation, in 1986-88, Mr. Mitterrand impeded conservatives' efforts to sell state-owned industries and undercut the government by publicly criticising its negotiations to free French hostages in Lebanon.

Some conservatives, even some moderates, are demanding that Mr. Mitterrand, 76, step down after the elections.

"In case of a really big failure in the legislative elections, the president should think about leaving," said Raymond Barre, a moderate who was prime minister in 1976-1981, when the conservatives last controlled both the presidency and parliament.

If Mr. Mitterrand stays, "we will have to make it clear that it's to apply the policies the French people want," said Hervé de Charette, a confidant of former President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing. "Otherwise, it's no longer a presidency. It's a monarchy."

Mr. Mitterrand shows no sign of stepping down, even after cancer surgery last year, and right-wing leaders fear a political gridlock with effects far beyond France's borders.

French backing is vital to U.N. Security Council resolutions on the Gulf and former Yugoslavia. Turf battles between Mr. Mitterrand and a hostile foreign minister could confuse other nations about who speaks for France.

Paris already is blocking a world trade agreement in order to protect the subsidies of French farmers, and the conservatives are even more beholden to rural voters.

Enthusiasm is waning for Mr. Mitterrand's dream of European union. Although the mainstream right sees the European Community (EC) as vital to French influence, dissidents demand that France reject a German-dominated EC monetary union.

Domestically, the Socialists will bequeath to their successors an unemployment rate of 10.5 per cent and a record budget deficit of \$41 billion.

Conservatives are confident of a huge mandate. Even though Socialist Premier Pierre Berégovoy says "no battle is ever lost in advance," he is talking about damage control, not victory.

Polls indicate the right is supported by about 40 per cent of the voters, double that of either the Socialists or a coalition of two environmental parties.

Under France's two-round election system, analysts believe the right-wing alliance could win 400 seats in the 577-member National Assembly.

Even so, conservatives fear Mr. Mitterrand will exploit personal ambitions to break up the uneasy union between rightist rivals.

Squabbling over the premiership already has begun.

The premier usually is the leader of the Assembly's largest party, but Mayor Jacques Chirac of Paris, who heads the dominant Rally for the Republic, does not want the job.

His popularity dwindled under the day-to-day political grind when he served as premier during the last cohabitation. Mr. Mitterrand handily defeated Mr. Chirac in the 1988 presidential election to win a second seven-year term.

As front-runner for the 1995 presidential race, Mr. Chirac does not want history to repeat itself.

Others see the premiership as a springboard to the presidency and are fighting for it.

Serb-Croatian clashes escalate in Krajina

ZAGREB (R) — Fighting between Serbs and Croats escalated Monday in the Serb-occupied enclave of Krajina after a weekend lull following a Croatian army push.

Rebel Serb authorities in Krajina's main city Knin accused Croatia of attacking along the enclave's southwestern front, 11 days after its forces swept across a U.N. ceasefire line.

But Croatian security sources attributed the fighting to a Serb counter-attack mounted with volunteer reinforcements from Serbia proper, the dominant republic of rump Yugoslavia.

Relative calm was reported in the western region near the Croatian port of Zadar, where the Croatian thrust to retake a strategic land route was launched, and around the Peruca Dam to the southeast of Knin.

An emergency operation is under way to drain Peruca's reservoir after charges planted by retreating Serbs ruptured the barrage in several places.

U.N. peacekeeping forces reported Serb military activity near Benkovac, a rebel bastion now within range of Croatian guns, but had no knowledge of the reported Croatian thrust.

The army command of the rebel "Republic of Serbian Krajina" said an all-out offensive had begun around dawn in an arc from Obrovac in the north to the coast near Skradin in the south.

Police in Zadar, which faces Krajina across a U.N. buffer zone breached by Serb troops on Jan. 22, reported heavy artillery duels and unspecified other fighting to the east.

"But they are hitting us harder than we are hitting them. This is a Serbian counter-offensive," a police spokesman said.

"They are trying to recoup territory lost to us in the Benkovac-Obrovac region in the past 10 days."

On Sunday, Serb Krajina authorities called on the United Nations to act within 48 hours to force a Croat withdrawal from all the territories taken in the latest fighting but did not say what action they would take if this did not happen.

Bosnian peace prospects hung in the balance despite weeks of tortuous negotiations in Geneva between the three warring groups. Bosnia's Muslim President Alija Izetbegovic said he would not join last-ditch talks at the United Nations.

Mediators Cyrus Vance, representing the U.N., and Lord Owen, representing the European Community, decided to refer the deadlock to the Security Council as a way of increasing pressure on Muslims and Serbs to accept a peace deal.

Only Bosnia's Croats have accepted a three-part plan drawn up by Mr. Vance and Lord Owen. Both Serbs and Muslims are balking at military arrangements and the Muslim-led government is holding out strongly against a planned post-war division of the former Yugoslav Republic into 10 semi-autonomous provinces.

Before flying to New York Monday, Lord Owen said a peace deal for Bosnia was close and urged the world to refrain from military action, further sanctions or lifting an arms embargo.

But in Bonn, German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel said Western countries might drop their opposition to arming the Muslim-led Bosnian government — much more lightly-equipped than its Serb foes — after the latest setback in peace talks.

Security Council support for the Vance-Owen plan is far from assured, with the United States criticising it as unfair to the Muslims. The largest ethnic group, Muslims are set to receive a disproportionately small area of land.

The Serb-besieged Bosnian capital of Sarajevo was quieter Monday with only sporadic artillery and sniper fire after a weekend of heavy shelling.

Meanwhile, three busloads of Croatian refugees, who said they were forced from their homes by armed Serbs in Krajina after Croatian troops began an offensive into the rebel Serb-held enclave, reached safety Sunday.

They were the first Croats apparently expelled from the mainly Serb-populated area of the former Yugoslav republic since Zagreb's army launched its offensive on Jan. 22.

Mostly elderly men and women, some invalids, the 135 refugees had to walk five kilometres with their baggage from Drnis, in United Nations-monitored no-man's land between Serb and Croatian forces, south of Pakovo Selo.

They waved their hands and wept as they passed the first Croatian checkpoint beyond the neutral zone and entered the hill village above the Adriatic coastal resort town of Sibenik.

Phnom Penh launches offensive against Khmer Rouge positions

PHNOM PENH (R) — The Phnom Penh government army has launched what appears to be a coordinated offensive against Khmer Rouge guerrilla positions in several provinces of Cambodia, the U.N. peacekeeping operation said Monday.

The fighting, which flared up in the past 72 hours, was the most serious since the deployment of U.N. peacekeepers in March last year, Eric Berman, spokesman for the U.N. Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), told a news briefing in Phnom Penh.

Latest reports said government troops were continuing a gradual movement towards the Khmer Rouge headquarters of Pailin near the Thai border and were within about 20 kilometres of the town, Mr. Berman said.

"It would seem as if they are trying to expand territory," UNTAC military spokesman Colonel Dick Palk said. "It would be fair to say that it's all occurring in traditionally troubled areas."

U.N. military observers had reported incidents in five central and northern provinces in the past three days, including artillery, rocket, mortar and gunfire exchanges, Col. Palk said.

"It is a significant (government) offensive and we would suggest that it has exceeded their right of self-defence. It would appear to be coordinated," he said.

It was unclear how many government troops were involved. Fighting had been reported in about 10 separate districts of Battambang, Kompong Thom, Preah Vihear, Siem Reap and Kratie provinces, Mr. Berman said.

"I don't think that since UNTAC has been here that we have been an offensive of this size."

Casualty reports were sketchy but initial indications suggested they had been slight, he said.

Mr. Berman said that in some incidents the size of the units involved was small, not even platoon strength in some small villages. It is not always that there is a clash. Sometimes they have retaken something and they have not met any resistance."

He said most reports of artillery exchanges had spoken of less than 10 shells being fired in each incident.

"These are not pitched battles going on in most of the country," he said.

Villagers had to flee the fighting in Siem Reap province, and there were reports from Battambang province that the government army had forced civilians to carry ammunition and obliged others to fight, including refugees recently returned from Thailand under a U.N. repatriation programme, the spokesman said.

Mr. Berman said there had been reports that some royalist troops loyal to head of state Prince Norodom Sihanouk has been involved in a small clash with government soldiers in the northwest of the province of Kompong Thom.

The fighting comes as UNTAC is concluding registration of voters for national elections scheduled for May 23-25, but the spokesmen said the reason and aim of the offensive remained unclear.

"It really only happened over the weekend and a bit before that so what we have been doing is just assessing what's coming in," Col. Palk said.

The spokesmen said there had been no reports that civilian or military personnel of the 22,000-strong UNTAC operation had been endangered.

The Phnom Penh government signed a formal end to more than 13 years of civil war with three guerrilla factions including the Khmer Rouge in October 1991.

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FRANCE'S SLAIN ENVOY: French paratroopers carry the coffin of French Ambassador Philippe Bernard who was killed when Zairean troops went on a rampage in Kinshasa. Some 100 people were killed during the unrest (AFP photo)

De Klerk may remove hardliners

JOHANNESBURG (Agencies) — The former defence minister denied reports that he might lead a military coup against President F.W. De Klerk to stop reforms, according to a report Monday.

Magnus Malan, who is leaving the government, said he was aware he and former President P.W. Botha had been linked to speculation of a coup, but the military could never oust the government.

"It is totally against the grain of the country's security forces. They are there to support the government of the day. That is part of the democratic system," Mr. Malan was quoted as saying in an interview with the Citizen newspaper.

Mr. Malan announced late Sunday he would retire from politics on March 1, giving up his post as minister of water affairs and forestry. He said he fully supported Mr. De Klerk's reforms to end apartheid.

There has been concern the military might move against Mr. De Klerk to preserve white minority rule, but the president appears to have the support of the majority of the armed forces.

The former defence minister and army chief was a bitter critic of the African National Congress (ANC). His departure is likely to ease Mr. De Klerk's plans for power sharing with the black majority.

Mr. Malan's departure is expected to lead to the retirement or removal of other hardliners in the cabinet as Mr. De Klerk prepares to end white rule. Mr. De Klerk expects the country's first multi-racial election in early 1994.

Mr. De Klerk, who took power in 1989, inherited several hardliners from the previous government. Ex-President Botha has criticised Mr. De Klerk's reforms to end apartheid.

Mr. Malan, 63, was removed from the Defence Ministry by Mr. De Klerk in a July 1991 shakeup prompted by revelations the government had secretly given money to the ANC's rival, the Inkatha Freedom Party.

In a statement late Sunday, Mr. Malan said he had planned for several months to leave politics in early 1993 and that his retirement would be effective on March 1.

His announcement followed speculation that Mr. De Klerk planned to remove the last cabinet hardline holdovers in preparations for a transitional, multi-racial government.

Meanwhile, Constitutional Development Minister Roelf Meyer said Monday white minority rule will not end in South Africa with the installation of multi-party transitional councils, expected later this year.

Responding to questions, he told a news conference: "The councils are not going to take over government as such in any respect. I want to emphasise this."

He said the councils would only be the first phase in the transition from minority rule to democracy and would provide forums for "multi-party cooperation" to level the field for the country's first universal franchise election.

"They will not be government in itself," Mr. Meyer said.

Asked afterwards if he could confirm the government view that the transitional councils would not mean the end of white minority rule, he told Reuters: "No, they will not end it."

Mr. Meyer said the government and Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) differed on this issue.

Senior ANC officials have said they want the transitional councils to have real teeth, including powers over the security forces, in the run-up to elections targeted for the end of this year or the beginning of next.

Mr. Meyer said the executive councils would not "take over day-by-day" direction of the security forces, although he said the precise nature of their authority had yet to be thrashed out in negotiations.

Speaking afterwards, Mr. Meyer said he believed the transitional executive councils would provide the opportunity for the lifting of remaining sanctions against South Africa.

"The South African government will have to take account of the councils' views. They will make up a formal structure which government will not be able to ignore."

Philippine police crush kidnap gang

MANILA (R) — Philippine police in Manila crushed a kidnap gang Monday, killing 14 of its members and rescuing 10 captives.

The police said the gang, known as the Red Scorpion Gang, had been active in the city for several months, kidnapping wealthy Filipinos and demanding large ransoms.

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Grandson of last Austrian emperor weds heiress

MARIAZELL, Austria (AP) — Central Europe's "wedding of the year" took place Sunday before a guest list studded with royalty.

When the grandson of the last Austrian emperor married a millionaire heiress, in an elaborate Catholic ceremony reminiscent of the past glory of the Habsburgs' Austro-Hungarian Empire, Karl von Habsburg-Lothringen, 32, married 34-year-old Francesca Thyssen-Bornemisza.

Ms. Thyssen-Bornemisza, whose mother tongue is English, is the daughter of German steel magnate Heinrich Thyssen and Flora Campbell-Walter, a relative of the Duke of Argyll. Royalty and nobility made up significant number of the 800 guests who flocked to Mariazell Cathedral, a Marian shrine associated with Habsburg monarchs, some 120 kilometres southeast of Vienna.

Mass was said in Latin, German and English, and family members from several European countries said prayers in German, English, Hungarian, Italian and Spanish.

Ukrainian shoes fit only for the grave